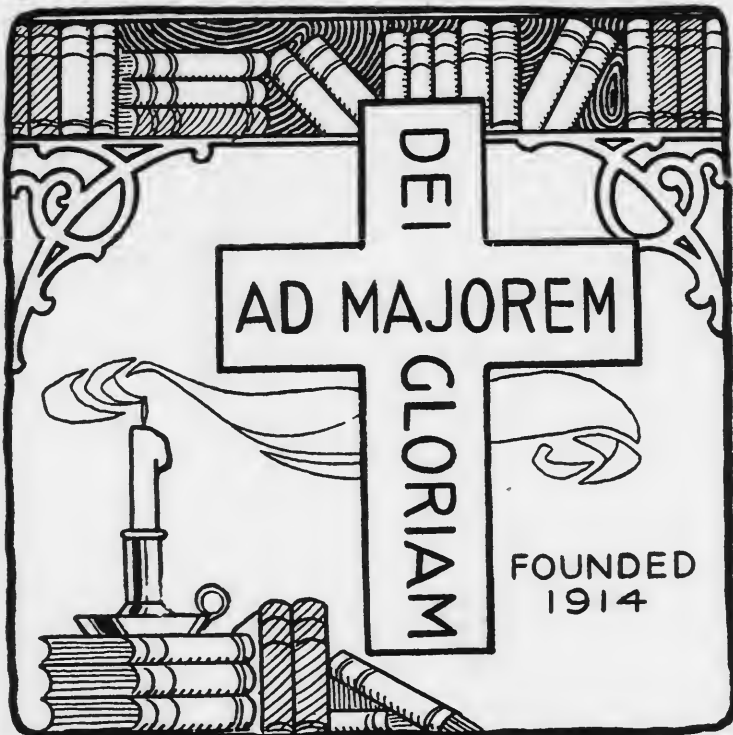


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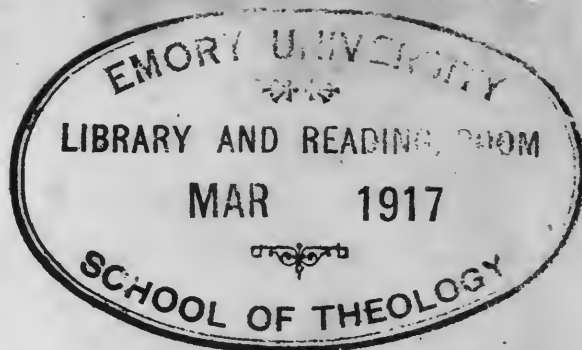
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BEING A SERIES OF PAPERS INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE,  
AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

"Keep the watch of the house that it be not broken down."—2 Kings xi, 6.

"Principiis obsta; sero medicina paratur  
Cum mala per longas convaluere moras."

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## P R E F A C E .

THE *Watchman's Lantern*, as its title intimates, was originally instituted for the purpose of throwing light on the proceedings of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and its representatives. Whether the acts of priestly domination herein detailed will bear the rigid scrutiny of public opinion, remains yet to be seen. Until a period comparatively recent, very little light has been shed on the secret springs of action of the Methodist Conference. The mysterious secrecy with which its meetings have been conducted, and the loud professions of zeal and sanctity which it has annually put forth, have been the means by which it has evaded public inquiry, whilst the scanty information respecting its proceedings, which it suffered to transpire, coloured by the medium of the party publications through which alone it could be obtained, was little likely to afford much insight into its real character. Partial glimpses, however, have from time to time been obtained behind the curtain, and the opinions respecting the Conference, expressed by several members of the body,\* and the fears entertained by others,† were not calculated to inspire unbounded confidence in the humble self-denial and pure disinterestedness of Methodist preachers in their corporate capacity. The shameful conduct of the Conference, in reference to the unfortunate transactions at Leeds in the year 1827-8, was the means of first awakening the suspicions of the Methodist people, but it was reserved for the last eighteen months to elicit a practical demonstration of the real principles of Conference government. These principles, as now boldly avowed and carried out by the preachers, fully bear out the opinions so prophetically expressed by Lord John Russell nearly twelve years ago:—

“Could the Methodists be invested by some revolution with the absolute power which Rome once possessed, there is reason to fear that unless checked by the genius of a more humane age, the Conference would equal Rome itself in the spirit of persecution.”

In the following pages will be found numerous illustrations of the absolute power claimed by the Methodist preachers, and of the mode in which it has been exercised, in the expulsion both of members of their own body and official and private members of society, for no other crime than that of honestly expressing their conscientious opinions. But the days of spiritual tyranny are numbered. As soon could we expect to see the fires of Smithfield again kindled, and the *auto-da-fes* of the Inquisition again to teem with their sacrifices to the demon of

\* See *Watchman's Lantern*, pp. 128, 157, 259, 295, 426, for the opinions of Drs. Clarke and Coke, and of Messrs. Crowther and Bramwell.

† See p. 171, for the fears of Mr. John Pawson.

bigotry, as imagine that in Britain, in the nineteenth century, principles of church government could be long maintained, of which the following law now openly avowed, and unblushingly acted upon by the preachers, affords an apt specimen:—

“Let no man nor number of men in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, call meetings, circulate letters, do or attempt to do any thing new, until it has been first appointed by the Conference.”

At the present day public opinion is brought to bear on the proceedings of almost every society in the kingdom, whether religious, scientific, or political. The late proceedings of the Legislature, in reference to the Orange Lodges, sufficiently demonstrates the jealousy with which any thing in the nature of a secret society is regarded. But if secrecy is thus justly looked upon with suspicion by the British public, what must be thought of a legislative body which though ostensibly meeting for religious purposes, and professing an identity of interests with the people under its care, yet most rigidly prohibits the presence not only of the public, but even of a single individual of that people for whose sole interests it professes to legislate!

To counteract the natural tendency to corruption of this state of things, and to bring down the lofty pretensions of the Conference to a level more consistent with Scripture and reason, the Wesleyan Methodist Association has been established. By its means information has been spread to a considerable extent amongst the Methodist Societies, a great part of which have been studiously kept in ignorance of the real questions at issue, by every species of slander and misrepresentation on the part of the Conference agents. The work of reformation has already commenced, and is now winning its widening way, notwithstanding the bitter opposition of those who would rather see the fabric of Methodism razed to the dust, than part with one of their arrogant claims to absolute power. Encouraged by their success, the members of the Association are determined to persevere,

“Nor bate one jot of heart or hope, but steer  
Right onward.”

If, as they conscientiously believe, their cause be a righteous one, it must succeed. To those who wish to preserve Methodism from sinking like the early Christian churches into corruption and sloth, having the form of godliness without the power; to those who would prevent the first principle of Protestantism, the right of private judgment, from being prostrated at the feet of a haughty priesthood, we would say “Come over and help us!” Finally, that truth may prevail, and that the present agitations in the religious world may terminate in the settlement of the questions at issue, on the best and surest foundations, that the glory of God and welfare of his Church may be promoted, is the earnest prayer of

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THE  
**WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;**

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
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TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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TO THE METHODIST PUBLIC.

THIS publication is established by the Wesleyan Methodist Association, for the purpose of circulating throughout the societies information on the present all-pervading topic of Methodistical reform, and of disabusing the public mind of any unfavourable impressions which may have been made by the slanderous falsehoods of late so industriously disseminated, respecting its motives, intentions, and objects. A newspaper, to be entitled "The Watchman," we understand, is about to be brought out, under the auspices of the Methodist Conference. Lest this "Watchman" should miss his way, for want of light, in the devious and crooked course he will probably be required to steer, we have determined to collect into one focus a few scattered beams of truth, to illuminate the darkness of his path. The rays of our "Lantern" are this week directed to bring to the light and expose to public animadversion a few only out of a series of transactions which the authors would rather, no doubt, were shrouded in Egyptian darkness. In the words of one of the sufferers,—“The time of secrecy and concealment is gone by. It is the privacy within the walls of a chapel vestry systematically enforced and observed,—especially when acts of priestly tyranny have been perpetrated,—which has encouraged our preachers to go to the present lengths.” This system is now at an end, and the acts of those “who love darkness rather than light,” for a reason which shall be nameless, shall henceforward have the cloak of concealment torn from them, and be exposed to the light, though it be but the feeble glimmer of a “Watchman's Lantern.”

*Principles of the Wesleyan Methodist Association.*

WE whose names are hereunto subscribed, being officers and members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, viewing with dismay the continued determination of the Conference, ever since the lamentable occurrences at Leeds in 1827, to disregard all law, to exercise an absolute sway over the people, and to treat with contempt their most respectful addresses, in consequence of which many of the most valuable members of the body have, in despair of a righteous course being returned to, united themselves with other religious denominations, to the manifest injury of Methodism; and fearing that if that body and its representatives longer pursue such a career, no honest and upright man can remain connected with them; having concluded that the time is fully come when a determined opposition should be organized, do, in the fear of GOD, form ourselves into a GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION, for the following purposes:—

1st. To obtain from the Conference a disavowal of the powers exercised by the Special District Meeting at Leeds, in 1827, and a revision of the Rules of 1797, so as to divest them, as much as possible, of all ambiguity as to the rights of both preachers and people, which, we think, is imperatively called for by the transactions of the meeting alluded to, and by the *absolute* decision of the Conference of 1834, to establish a Theological Institution, without consulting the constituted authorities of Methodism.

2d, To obtain from the Conference their consent to open all its sittings to the Public, under the following restrictions:—*first*, that the people shall sit apart from the preachers, and not be entitled to vote; and *secondly*, that each travelling preacher in full connexion be allowed to admit, by ticket, one person to each sitting of the Conference, excepting only when the characters of the preachers are under examination, and when the members of the legalized fund are transacting their own peculiar business.

We agree that, until the Conference grant these our reasonable requests, we will withhold our contributions from the Missionary, Contingent, Chapel, and all Funds whatsoever which are under its control, and confine ourselves to the maintenance of the preachers in our own circuits.

We resolve:

1st. That a fund be created to defray the necessary expenses of postage, printing, deputations, &c. in communicating with the



Branch Associations, to be formed upon similar principles in different parts of the kingdom, and to support such preachers as may, in consequence of advocating our views, be deprived of their usual means of subsistence.

2d. That a committee, consisting of a chairman, treasurer, secretaries, and twenty-four members, be appointed.

3d. That the meetings of this Association be held as often as the committee think necessary, or upon a requisition to the chairman, signed by any ten members.

7th Nov. 1834.

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*A Brief Statement of the Trial, and Expulsion from the Methodist Society, of Mr. David Rowland, and the Expulsion, without Trial, of four other Class Leaders, in the Liverpool North Circuit, in December, 1834.*

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“ Can such things be,  
And overcome us like a summer cloud,  
Without our special wonder?”

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IN the present state of convulsive agitation into which the Methodist societies have been thrown by recent events, no apology need be offered for bringing before the eye of the public the following most extraordinary proceedings. The conduct of the Conference, and its agents, during the last few years, has sufficiently evinced their determination to resume that arbitrary and irresponsible power which they so unwillingly resigned to the remonstrances of an indignant people in the years 1795 and 1797. These attempts, being at first insidiously and covertly made, for a long period escaped the observation of those who viewed merely the outward aspect of our societies. But though the causes were in some degree concealed, the evil effects soon manifested themselves, and “ murmurs, not loud but deep,” have long pervaded the Methodist community at the neglect, on the part of our preachers, of their pastoral duties, their inattention to our Sunday schools, and their jealousy of the humble and unobtrusive, but pre-eminently useful, labours of our local preachers. The transactions of the last few months, however, have fanned into a flame the smouldering embers of discontent. The resolutions of the last Conference, to *force* upon the people a Theological Institution, without consulting the proper authorities, as required by the Methodistical laws, and the monstrous assumption of power in the illegal suspension of Dr. Warren, for daring to publish his sentiments on that important question, have given the finish-

ing touches to a picture already sufficiently striking. The call for help from Manchester has been responded to from all parts of the kingdom. A chord has been struck which has vibrated to the hearts of those Methodists who have long mourned in secret over the evils which have cramped the energies, and fettered the free spirit of our beloved connexion. The result has been the establishment of the "Wesleyan Methodist Association," which has for its object the restoration of those privileges of the people, of which the preachers now seek to deprive them. This Association is now winning its widening way, and has far exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of those by whom it has been originated. Surprised at this novel demonstration of strength, on the part of those whom they are accustomed to consider as having nothing to do with the laws but to obey them, the preachers, and their thoroughgoing partisans in Liverpool and elsewhere, have used all their efforts to put down the Association, by expelling from the Methodist society, "*per fas et nefas*," legally or illegally, all those who have had the hardihood to express their dissent from their repeated violations of the laws of Methodism.

The cases of Mr. Greenhalgh and Captain Barlow, of Manchester, are already before the public. Those of Messrs. Shirley, Farrer, and Widdows, in the Liverpool South Circuit, narrated in the present number, sufficiently outrage the principles of common sense, and the rules of the Methodist society; but the following case of Mr. Rowland, and the other Leaders of the Liverpool North Circuit, we venture to assert, is hitherto without a parallel in the annals even of Methodistical despotism. Refused the privilege of a fair trial, forcibly and illegally expelled from a religious community as no longer worthy to partake of its privileges, they have no other resource, for the defence of their own characters, and the vindication of the purity of their motives, but an appeal to the Methodist,—to the religious public.

Though they are Methodists, they cannot forget that they are Englishmen; dear to them as are their religious privileges, they will not consent to forego their undoubted rights as members of civil society,—liberty of conscience to think for themselves, and freedom of speech to give utterance to their conscientious opinions.

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On the 23d Nov. Mr. D. Rowland, class leader and local preacher in the Liverpool North Circuit, received a letter, of which the following is a copy:—

"Liverpool, 23d Nov. 1834

"Sir,—As superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit, I give you notice to attend the leaders' meeting, at Leeds-street Chapel Vestry, on Thursday evening next, at the usual hour, to answer certain charges which will then be preferred against you, particularly,

"1st,—For convening and holding an assembly of Methodist officers at your own house, on Friday evening, the 24th October last.

"2d,—For having, on Friday evening last, in the Music-hall, Bold-street, at a public meeting called for the purpose, advocated and recommended to the members and officers of our society, to join with yourself and others in furthering the efforts

of a certain association stated at that time to have been organized at the Bethel Room on Monday, the 10th instant, called 'The Wesleyan Methodist Association.'

"I am, Sir, yours, respectfully,

"SAMUEL JACKSON."

"Mr. David Rowland, Pilot-office."

At the leaders' meeting, held on Thursday evening, Nov. 27, 1834, in Leeds-street Chapel Vestry, the Rev. SAMUEL JACKSON, the superintendent preacher in the chair, the charges were brought forward, when

Mr. A. BARNES, society steward, inquired whether, in the present instance, the scriptural rule had been attended to, which enjoins that, in the case of any dispute, a private interview and expostulation should be sought previous to bringing the matter before the church?

Mr. JACKSON replied that it had not; that he considered such an application as a mere quibble on a technicality; but, nevertheless, if insisted on, he had no objection to postpone the subject for a week.

The trial was accordingly adjourned.

In the course of the ensuing week, Mr. Rowland was called upon by Messrs. Thos. Sands, Thos. Vernon, and Michael Ashton, who endeavoured to prevail upon him to make some concessions, and to withdraw from the Association; to which Mr. Rowland replied, that, being perfectly convinced of the justice and righteousness of the cause which he had espoused, his mind was made up as to the consequences. He likewise informed them, in answer to certain questions, that he should neither admit nor deny the charges brought against him, but should require them to go into the proof.

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#### LEADERS' MEETING, DECEMBER 4, 1834.

The charges were laid as follows,—first, calling a meeting of Methodist officers at his house, on Friday evening the 24th of October;—secondly, Assisting in the formation of the Wesleyan Association, at the Bethel rooms;—thirdly, Advocating the objects of the said society, at a public meeting in the Music-hall, on the 21st November, 1834.

The charges having been read,—

Mr. BARNES, not a member of the Association, rose and moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. BROOKS:—

"That the charges against Brother Rowland are considered frivolous and vexatious, and that Brother Rowland be affectionately requested by this meeting to continue connected with us, and give us his services as usual."

Mr. JACKSON said, the motion was too hastily proposed.

Mr. BARNES.—How can you charge me with hastily submitting this motion? Have we not had the charges before us for an entire week? I have pondered them seriously: the case has disturbed my rest.

Mr. JACKSON said the charges must first be proved, and he now called upon Mr. Rowland to say whether he admitted or denied them.

Mr. ROWLAND said, that no doubt Mr. Thos. Vernon, who brought the charges, had told Mr. Jackson the conversation which took place in Mr. Rowland's house, on Saturday the 29th Nov., 1834, in company



with Messrs. Sands and Ashton, when, in answer to a question of Mr. Ashton's, Mr. Rowland said that he should certainly require the proofs of the charges to be given; and he could only now add, that without either admitting or denying them, he should insist upon the proofs.

Mr. JACKSON.—Nay, but you must do one or the other.

Mr. ROWLAND.—I shall do neither; but require the proofs.

Mr. JACKSON.—Then you will neither say yes nor no?

Mr. ROWLAND.—Certainly not. You must go into the proofs.

#### FIRST CHARGE.

The witness called in support of the first charge was THOS. TOWNLEY, jun., leader and local preacher, who had been invited by note to Mr. Rowland's house. He stated that he attended, not knowing what kind of a meeting it was to be, whether a cup of tea, a glass of wine, or supper. He found a large assembly of officers from both circuits, two strangers from Manchester, and a gentleman from London. From what was said, he learnt that the objects of the meeting were to address Dr. Warren, and to create a fund for the correction of abuses in Methodism. His impression was, it was a bad meeting; and after a while he went away.

Mr. Townley was requested to name any individuals present who were at Mr. Rowland's house. He named Messrs. Ormes, Burnett, Gleave, and Haddon.

Cross-examined by Messrs. BARNES and BURNETT.—Could not deny but he had some idea of the kind of meeting it was to be.—About half an hour before, his brother John had given him information that a meeting had taken place the week previous in the South Circuit.—He thought it might be a Radical meeting.

But though you had this impression you went, not knowing but it might possibly be either tea, supper, a glass of wine, or a Radical meeting; you would take your chance?—Yes.

#### SECOND CHARGE.

Witness, (WILLETT,) a youth just come to town, was present at the Bethel Room when Mr. Rowland took an active part in the proceedings. The declaration was read, approved, and signed.

Cross-examined by Mr. BARNES.—You were there?—Yes. Did you vote?—Yes. In favour?—Yes. Did you sign?—Yes. Are you now a member of the Association?—No. What, I suppose you have got fresh light?—Yes.

#### THIRD CHARGE.

Witness, Jos. VERNON. Examined by Mr. JACKSON.—Were you at the Music-hall?—Yes. You saw Mr. Rowland there?—Yes. You heard him speak?—Yes. Can you tell us what he said, in substance?—Yes.—After witness had proceeded some way in describing the tenor of the speech,—

Mr. ROWLAND asked,—Had you, Mr. Ashton, not better read the speech? *I perceive you have the newspaper report.*

Mr. ASHTON.—Do you admit it to be your speech?

Mr. ROWLAND.—Why, you can read it, and Mr. Vernon can then say whether it is the same as he heard from me.

Here the speech was effectively read by Mr. Ashton.

Mr. BARNES, to witness,—What did you think of the speech?—It was a good speech.

Mr. BARNES.—I suppose Brother Rowland seemed very happy and fluent, as usual?—O yes; he was all alive.

Mr. ASHTON rose to take exception to the interference of the parties who were present at the times mentioned in the charges. He did not know how those brethren could in conscience vote as honest men.

Mr. BARNES.—Pray were not you, Messrs. Ashton, Sands, and Vernon, at the Music-hall?—Yes.

Mr. BARNES.—Then you are here in the character of accomplices.

Mr. JACKSON.—No; they took no part.

Mr. ROWLAND.—But they saw the robbery and stood by, and the law of this land would view them *as accomplices*; besides, I would ask each one of them,—Did they speak against the proceedings?

To this no answer was returned, when Mr. BARNES observed,—Then they are accomplices. Here the matter dropped.

Mr. DEMAINE.—I would like to know how many private meetings Mr. Vernon had at his house?—None.

Here Mr. Demaine called upon Brother REID, who said that Mr. Vernon had invited him (Reid) to his house.

Mr. JACKSON.—This is wandering. The charge is against Brother Rowland.

Mr. ROWLAND.—I demand to be informed by what law I am now being tried. Am I to understand that you are now trying me as a class leader?

Mr. JACKSON.—No; as a private member.

Brother REID stated that Mr. Vernon told him there were three or four at his house the night before.

Mr. ROWLAND.—I insist upon it, I am now on my trial as a leader. I ask, am I, or am I not, a member of this meeting? Why, this proceeding is monstrous. You know you cannot remove me but by a vote of this meeting; and to get over the difficulty, you affect to consider me as a private member. In that case, what immorality am I charged with?

The CHAIRMAN.—Let us have the facts proved, and you shall have the law afterwards. I must now have the opinion of the meeting as to the charges. You who are of opinion that Brother Rowland had a meeting of the kind stated at his house—that he was at the Bethel Room, assisting in the formation of the Association—and that he was at the Music-hall and made the speech which has been read, will signify it by holding up your hands. Six hands were held up—T. Vernon, accuser; J. Vernon, witness; T. Townley, witness; —. Willet, witness, not a member of the meeting, and who had no vote; Rev. W. O. Booth, preacher, who had not heard the evidence; and W. George.

You who are of a contrary mind hold up your hands.—None.

Mr. JACKSON.—Now, Mr. Ashton, you will read the law against these kind of proceedings.

Mr. Ashton read the law of 1796,—“Let no man nor number of men “in our connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call “meetings, do or attempt to do any thing new, till it has been first “appointed by the Conference.”

Mr. ROWLAND warned the leaders that his fate was in their hands. They must not only be satisfied that the charges were proved, but that

a law was violated; then they would have to say that the offence was of such a character as to justify their removal of him from office. The charges constituted no offence, because there was no law. The law of 1796 was *obsolete, done away*, cancelled by the constitution granted and agreed to by the Conference and the lay-representatives, in 1797.\* In that constitution there was no law for such circumstances; all that was said upon the subject was mere matter of opinion. "We (the Conference) think." And pray was there no other party allowed to think? Was there ever a law so framed? "We think!" And where is the penalty? There is no penalty; and where there is no penalty, *there can be no law*. Brethren, I tell you I can only be removed from my office in this meeting by your vote. [Here he stated the rule.†] My removal in any other way, from any other quarter, will be *illegal*. I shall protest against it; it will be null and void; and if you can vote me away on the charges laid, especially when there is no law broken, you trample down the constitution of 1797, and prove yourselves undeserving the concessions which were then wrung from the Conference.

Mr. JACKSON rose and said, Mr. Marsden being the chairman of the district, he had invited him as his adviser, and he now requested Mr. Marsden to say whether the law of 1796, referred to, had ever been done away.

Mr. MARSDEN, standing with hat in hand, said he was just going, for *he could not stop to hear the laws of the connexion so spoken of*, and he must state, in reply to the question put by the superintendent, he being a preacher at the time, that the law quoted was the law still; it had not been rescinded.

Mr. ROWLAND.—If so, the concessions of 1797 were of no avail; the time, the labour of our forefathers in wringing those concessions from an unwilling Conference were thrown away.

Mr. ORMES said, in substance, that the reign of Popery was reviving. It appeared plain to him that the preachers had made up their minds. They were now only wanting the civil power, and they were ready for any thing.

Mr. BARNES then pressed the Chairman to put his motion (mentioned above) to the vote.

After some hesitation, Mr. JACKSON stated he would take another week to consider of it, and immediately dismissed the meeting.

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## LEADERS' MEETING, DECEMBER 11, 1834.

REV. S. JACKSON IN THE CHAIR.

After the ordinary business of the meeting had been gone through, Mr. Barnes requested the Chairman to appoint a committee of leaders

\* For proof of this see the Rules of 1797, Section 4, No. 4. See also Section 6. "We have determined that *all* the rules which relate to the societies, leaders, stewards, local preachers, trustees, and quarterly meetings, shall be published with the Rules of the Society, for the benefit and convenience of all the members."—The above rule of 1796 is *not* so published. Further comment is unnecessary.

† No person shall be appointed a leader or steward, or removed from his office, but in conjunction with the leaders' meeting; the nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the leaders' meeting.—*Rules of 1797, Section 4, No. 1.*

to decide upon the claims of the applicants to the late Messrs. Kevan and Macham's bounty, which is annually distributed on New Year's Day.

The CHAIRMAN replied, That matter must stand over for the present, until the case of Brother David Rowland, which had been adjourned from last week's leaders' meeting, had been disposed of.

Mr. BARNES then said, that as some members of the meeting were now present, who were absent from the two former meetings in which Brother Rowland's case had been introduced, he should, for their information, beg to read over the minutes of the two former meetings.

This was strongly objected to by the Chairman, but, after some discussion, the minutes were read.

The CHAIRMAN said those minutes gave a very partial and unfaithful account of what took place at the two former meetings; but as several of the brethren present spoke to the accuracy of the leading facts contained in the minutes, the subject dropped.

The Chairman then proceeded to repeat the charges against Brother David Rowland, for attending illegal meetings, &c. which he said had been fully proved at the last leaders' meeting, and notwithstanding the indignant protestations from all parts of the room, immediately pronounced "that Brother David Rowland was no longer a member of the Methodist Society."

The meeting appeared completely astounded at such an arbitrary and illegal assumption of power in the Chairman, and several brethren declared that Brother Rowland had broken no law of Methodism to which he was amenable; and that, consequently, they should still consider him both a member of Society, and also of that meeting; upon which Mr. Barnes rose and read the following protest, which was instantly adopted, and signed on the spot by *nineteen* out of twenty-seven brethren present, including accusers and witnesses:—

*Vestry of Leeds-street Chapel,*

*Liverpool, Dec. 11, 1834.*

We, the undersigned, being Leaders and Stewards of the Society connected with Leeds-street Chapel, having had submitted to us in full meeting certain charges preferred against our esteemed brother Rowland, a local preacher and a member of this meeting, upon which charges our said brother was, by the Rev. Samuel Jackson, declared to be expelled from office, and from the Methodist Society, and having attentively considered the said charges, do hereby declare that it is our opinion that the said charges are frivolous and vexatious.

We, therefore, enter this as our solemn protest against the whole proceedings in the trial of our said brother, as being *anti-Methodistical, unconstitutional, and unjust*, and declare that we consider the expulsion of our Brother David Rowland, as *ineffectual, null, and void*, and that he is, notwithstanding thereof, a member of the Methodist Society and of this Leaders' Meeting.

ANTHONY BARNES  
THOS. HAWKINS,  
THOS. ORMES,  
WILLIAM FOGG,  
JOHN GLEAVE,  
RICHARD SHARPE,  
DANIEL BROOK,

JAMES THOMPSON,  
ROBERT BEATTY,  
HENRY BURNETT,  
GOWAN RUSSELL,  
PETER BARBER,  
ROBERT HADDON,

EDWARD PARTRIDGE,  
WILLIAM IANSON,  
RICHARD DEAN,  
JOHN DEMAINE,  
JOHN TAYLOR,  
E. ROWLAND.

Signed since the meeting:

JAMES RIED,

JOHN BROUGH,

WILLIAM ROTHERY.

Mr. ROWLAND then rose, and claimed to be heard.—Mr. Jackson commanded him to be silent.—The meeting insisted upon their Brother Rowland being heard, declaring he was not expelled.—As soon as order was obtained,

Mr. ROWLAND said,—Brethren, I feel a sweet, a delightful sense of God's love and favour. I love him, and I know that he loves me; and in reference to what has brought me under the anathema of the superintendent, I have to say that throughout I have acted from a deep, a solemn, and a deliberate conviction of imperative duty to God and to this religious society, to which I have been united from my earliest years. I will just add, that it is a matter of satisfaction to think that the time of secrecy and concealment is gone by. These acts of ecclesiastical cruelty and injustice shall be proclaimed from one end of this land to the other. It is the privacy within the walls of a chapel vestry, which has been systematically enforced and observed,—especially when acts of priestly tyranny were perpetrated,—that has encouraged you to go to the present lengths. That time is gone by; and this night's deed of darkness and oppression, I frankly and solemnly assure you, shall be exposed to the view, the animadversion, and condemnation of the Christian public.

The CHAIRMAN then said there were other members of the meeting who were accomplices with Brother Rowland in this affair, and called upon Mr. Michael Ashton to proceed with his charges against those individuals. Mr. Ashton then severally charged Messrs. Ormes, Brook, Burnett, and Gleave, with being members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, and called upon those brethren to *answer* to the *charge*, whether guilty or not guilty! In reply to this interrogation, those brethren all refused to answer any such questions, stating that they had broken no law of Methodism, and that they would not submit to be tried by any other than the laws of 1797, contained in their class-books; they also protested against all such proceedings as the present, as being unjust, unmethodistical, and unscriptural; and that they should still consider themselves members of that meeting, and should attend its sittings as heretofore.

The following motion was then regularly moved and seconded:—

That the brethren cited to answer the above charges having broken no law of Methodism, and no proof having been brought forward of the charges preferred against them, this meeting regards them as innocent men.

The Chairman having refused to put this motion to the vote, Mr. Barnes called upon all those who approved of the motion to hold up their hands, when it was carried by a large majority!

It was then moved,—“That the Chairman, having refused to put the above-named motion to the vote, be requested to leave the chair, and that Mr. Barnes take his place.” To which he replied, after a few more words, that he would leave the chair; and immediately, amidst much confusion and disorder, pronounced the four brethren, namely, Ormes, Brook, Burnett, and Gleave, no longer members of the Methodist Society.

This proceeding immediately called forth the following protest, which



was signed by most of the brethren present, who were still members of the meeting:—

The undersigned protest against the expulsion of brothers Brook, Orme, Gleave, and Burnett, from their offices, and from the Society, without trial:—

ANTHONY BARNES,	WILLIAM FOGG,	GOWAN RUSSELL,
ROBERT HADDON,	ROBERT BEATTY,	JOHN DEMAINE,
PETER BARBER,	EDWARD PARTRIDGE	DAVID ROWLAND,
THOMAS HAWKINS,	RICHARD SHARPE,	E. ROWLAND.

Signed since the meeting :

JOHN BROUGH,	WILLIAM ROTHERY,	JAMES RIED,
WILLIAM IANSON	C. HAMILTON,	JOHN TAYLOR.

Thus ended a series of the most extraordinary exhibitions of arbitrary power that ever disgraced the annals of Methodism, in which a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which publishes peace and goodwill towards men, is found doing all he can, not to save souls, but to cut them off from communion with the Church of Christ, and again turn them over to the temptations and snares of the world.

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*Report of the Trial and Expulsion of William Shirley, Leader and Local Preacher, and of Richard Widdows and Richard Farrer, Private Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, connected with Mount Pleasant Chapel, Liverpool.*

ON Monday, 1st December, 1834, notes were delivered to the three persons above-named. The following is a copy:—

*“ Mount Pleasant Chapel House, Dec. 1, 1834.*

“ SIR,—At the request of Mr. Marsden, our Superintendent, I have to inform you that a charge will be preferred against you by Mr. John Fulford, at the Leaders’ Meeting, in the Mount Pleasant Chapel Vestry, on Tuesday evening, the 2d instant, at eight o’clock.

“ You are charged with being a member of an unconstitutional association.

“ I am,

“ Yours, truly,

“ JNO. S. STAMP.”

At the time appointed Mr. SHIRLEY and Mr. WIDDOWS attended; but Mr. FARRER’S case, as will be seen by the sequel, was postponed until the succeeding week.

The substance of what took place on Tuesday evening, Dec. 2, is, that Mr. Shirley was proved to be a member of “the Wesleyan Methodist Association,” and the law which he was stated to have thereby violated was one of 1796.

“ Let no man nor number of men in our connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do or attempt to do any thing new, till it has been first appointed by the Conference.”

Mr. MARSDEN put it to the meeting whether or not the Association was contrary to that law. Four or five hands were held up in the affirmative, and, of course, *none* in the negative.

The matter was postponed until Tuesday evening, Dec. 9; present the Rev. George Marsden, (in the chair), Rev. James Dixon, and about twenty-eight leaders.

Mr. MARSDEN opened the business by saying, "Sometimes we (the preachers) have pleasant duties to perform, and sometimes unpleasant ones; the one to be performed this night is of the latter description. I informed you last week that Mr. Farrer had written me a note, stating he could not attend last week, and that therefore it might stand over until to-night. I perceive Mr. Farrer is present [here Mr. F. made a bow], and we will therefore proceed with his case."

Here Mr. WIDDOWS begged to take precedence, and it was agreed that he should do so.

Mr. Widdows read from the Minutes of Conference the law of 1796, and showed by reference to the Minutes of 1797, that that law was abrogated. He then said, "Sir, I feel it an honour to stand where I now do, and to avow myself a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Association. I keep a scrap book for the insertion of family affairs: in it I shall insert the particulars of this affair, that my children and children's children may have knowledge of my exertions in the cause of religious liberty."

Mr. FARRER was then called upon, and proceeded as follows:—  
"Sir, I received a note from Mr. Stamp, written by your instructions, stating that I was charged by Mr. John Fulford with being a member of an unconstitutional association. Now, Sir, when I became a member of this society, I never gave to the preachers, nor the leaders' meeting, the right of a general supervision over my conduct. The agreement entered into was, that as long as I observed the rules of the society, I should be continued a member, and be supported in my privileges by this meeting. Conceiving, therefore, that I was entitled to a knowledge not only of what I had done, but of what rule was violated, I sent you the following answer:—

"December 1, 1834,

"REV. SIR,—I have received a note written at your request by Mr. Stamp, which states that a charge will be preferred against me to-morrow evening, at Mount Pleasant Chapel. Circumstances over which I have no control will engage me to-morrow and the two following evenings.

"I shall feel obliged by your appointing when I shall attend; and at the same time you inform me what evening you fix, perhaps you will have the goodness to point out what rule of the Methodist Society I have broken.

"Yours, respectfully,

"To the Rev. G. Marsden."

"RD. FARRER.

"To this note, Sir, you sent the following reply:—

"December 2, 1834.

"SIR,—If you cannot be present this evening at the leaders' meeting, the charge may be postponed to the regular meeting this day week.

"I expect that Mr. Stamp's note specified the charge.

"I am your wellwisher,

"G. MARSDEN."

"To Mr. R. Farrer."

With all respect to you, Sir, I feel it necessary to state that this answer is any thing but satisfactory, and that I had a right to know, before taking any trial at this meeting, which of the rules I had broken, because Mr. Fulford, or any body else, might charge me with going to bed at eleven o'clock at night, instead of ten, or with any thing else equally ridiculous. I beg, therefore, that you, Sir, and this meeting, will distinctly understand that I am here to-night out of courtesy, as I would not be accused of even the appearance of disrespect.

Mr. JOHN FULFORD, Mr. WM. BYROM, jun., and Mr. WM. CLARK, then proved having seen and heard Mr. Farrer in various meetings of the association.

Mr. FARRER asked the Chairman to state the law which was broken, and, after some little hesitation, Mr. Marsden read the law of 1796, as given above.

Mr. FARRER.—Then, Sir, my first business will be to prove that what you have now advanced as law, is no law at all.

My first proof is from the Concessions of 1797, wherein it is stated that the Conference was requested to reconsider this very law, which was, in consequence, reduced to a mere "we think," &c. Now, Sir, if I tell my son to-day that he must not do a thing, but to-morrow I tell him that he may do it, with certain limitations, he will, of course, understand that he is not bound by the former.

My second proof is drawn from the same Concessions, in which the Conference declares,—"*We have determined that all the rules which relate to the societies, leaders, stewards, local preachers, trustees, and quarterly meetings, shall be published with the Rules of the Society, for the benefit and convenience of all the members.*"

Can you tell me, Sir, whether or not the rule you have quoted is amongst those so published?

After some hesitation, Mr. Marsden said he *thought* it was not.

Mr. FARRER.—And I, Sir, have read them very carefully, and am *sure* it is not.

My third proof is from a pamphlet published some years ago, by Mr. Vevers. In page 11, he says, speaking of 1795 and 1797,—"*The Conference itself has not the power to make or promulgate any new law which changes or affects the constitution of Methodism. By so doing, it would commit an act of suicide. I maintain that the Conference has not that power, unless it destroy itself.*"

My fourth proof is from Mr. Watson. In page 14 of his Affectionate Address to the London South Circuit, he says,—"*The Rules of 1795 and 1797 are always considered by the Conference as the final rule of decision.*"

My fifth proof is from the Conference itself. In page 89 of the Minutes for 1829, it is stated that 1795 and 1797 "*form the only basis of our fellowship as a distinct religious society, and the only ground on which our communion with each other can be continued.*"

Thus, Sir, have I proved, yea, demonstrated, that what you are attempting to pass upon this meeting for law, is not law. But even supposing that it were law, I, as a private member, have nothing to do with it, nor with any law or rule which is not published in the "Rules of the Society."



I shall now be obliged, Sir, by your informing me what is the province of this meeting—what it is that it has to decide in this case?

Mr. Marsden declined answering.

Mr. FARRER.—Then, Sir, I must myself inform them what the authorities in Methodism say is the duty of a leaders' meeting.—In the removal of a leader there is no question but that he cannot be removed without the consent of a majority. The case of a private member has, by different persons, been as variously construed. The rule is,—“No person must be expelled from the society, for any breach of our rules, or even for manifest immorality, till such fact or crime has been proved at a leaders' meeting.” I am perfectly aware that the word *AT* has been construed by many superintendents to mean that there is no necessity the *meeting* should be satisfied, but merely the *preacher*. I shall, therefore, give some authorities on the other side of the question.

1.—The *Methodist Magazine* for May, 1829, says it means “to the satisfaction of the meeting.”

I believe you, Sir, were a preacher in 1797?

Mr. MARSDEN.—Yes; I was.

Mr. FARRER.—But you were not, I think, one of the 145 who signed the Concessions of that year?

Mr. MARSDEN.—No; I was not.

Mr. FARRER.—Then, Sir, I have a better authority than yours as to the powers then given to leaders' meetings. It is that of one of the 145 who signed the Concessions of 1797, “voluntarily and in good faith;” but who, seven years afterwards, having changed his mind, wrote a book against the very men whom Mr. Vevers calls the “giants of 1797; the friends of religious liberty, and of primitive and genuine Methodism.” Such a man was *most* likely to know, and *least* likely to overstate the concessions.

He says, (pp. 85, 86,)—“The Conference, for the sake of peace, conceded to the clamorous faction, who called themselves the people, (the delegates of 1797,) one degree of authority after another, till they put it out of their own power to dismiss a leader from his office, without the sanction of a leaders' meeting; or take a preacher, however qualified, into their connexion, if a majority at a quarterly meeting should express its disapprobation. The leaders' meeting being constituted judges of themselves and the people, the transition was easy to their determination, that no preacher should be continued a second year, if they resolved on his removal. This last degree of authority they assumed, for it was never conceded; but this does not prevent their exercising it, without control, nor is there any appeal from their decision.”

Again, (pp. 122, 123,)—“Beside, should the latter, (the preachers,) through passion or prejudice, decide unjustly, the injured party may have THEM called to account for their conduct, at the annual district meetings and Conference. In these assemblies, charges against preachers from any quarter are duly attended to; and every degree of weight is allowed to them which they justly merit. But according to the new disorganizing plan adopted, [the Concessions of 1797,] however unjust the decisions of a leaders' meeting may be, the injured party HAS NO APPEAL.”

3.—Mr. Watson, in page 23 of his pamphlet already quoted, says, "The constitution provides that no person shall be expelled from society, or be removed from his office, but in CONJUNCTION with the leaders' meeting."

I think, Sir, I have now produced sufficient authority to show this meeting what their duty is upon the present occasion. I shall now, Sir, speak of myself individually. Before I could walk I was carried to this building, and from infancy to manhood I worshipped here. The first serious impressions ever made upon my mind were from *your* lips. I have been a member of this society upwards of twenty-one years, and, except upon some few occasions, an unobtrusive member; and I have been content to labour in scenes (the Sunday Schools) considered by many as irksome and unpleasant. Had I been guilty of drunkenness, or many *real* crimes, it is more than likely I might have remained a member as long as I pleased; but because I stand forward in defence of the liberties of the people, which the preachers—[Here Mr. Marsden objected to personality, and Mr. Farrer apologized, and then proceeded] Because I stand forward in defence of the liberties of the people, which have been trampled under foot, and of the rights of these meetings which have been set aside, and for which you men who are present and most other leaders' meetings are deeply guilty, I am, forsooth, to be brought here, and that, too, upon an imaginary law. My father, Sir, left to me an unspotted name, which I have not disgraced, and the rules of this society I have not broken. I tell you, Sir, that if you *put*, and I tell this meeting that if they *vote upon*, any thing else but the question whether or not I have broken the rules of this society, as stated in the class books, that you *both* violate the faith pledged to me when I became a member, and that both you and they must account for the injustice before the Judge of all the earth.

In reference to the Association, of which I have the honour to be a member, I make this declaration, that, having begun the work of agitation, by God's help, I shall carry it on until the regeneration of Methodism being complete, the "report of that abominable Special District Meeting at Leeds, in 1827," shall be committed to the flames, whilst the cry goes up, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people."

Mr. MARSDEN then desired the accused to withdraw whilst the meeting gave in their verdict, but Mr. Farrer and the others positively refused,—and Mr. Marsden proceeded to say that he must take the vote of the meeting upon the law of 1796. Mr. Farrer protested against it: but Mr. Marsden put it to the meeting, "You who are of opinion that 'this law has been violated, hold up your hands;'" when five or six hands were held up in the affirmative, and, of course, none in the negative, the men all crying out that it was a shame and an insult.

One of the persons present, who had signed the declaration of "the friends of peace and good order," was deeply distressed, and desired Mr. Marsden to erase his name from that paper, as he dare not be a party to turning out such men.

Mr. MARSDEN quietly informed the culprits that they were no longer members of the society.

Mr. SHIRLEY, as a leader, protested against being removed except in concurrence with the meeting.\*

\* A fuller account of Mr. Shirley's trial will be published in the next number.

A long conversation ensued, during which Mr. Dixon said that Mr. Farrer knew very well that the usual leaders' and quarterly meetings could not co-exist with this Association.

Mr. FARRER agreed that they must come into collision; "but" said he, "I state, in my official capacity as Chairman of the Liverpool Association, that if the superintendents of these two circuits would have pledged themselves to give free scope for discussion in the quarter days, this Association would not now have been in existence."

After the meeting was closed, and the benediction pronounced, Mr. Farrer said—"I beg to return Mr. Marsden my thanks for his patient attention, and for the quiet manner in which he pronounced our expulsion, as being so different from the scandalous behaviour of Mr. Anderson, in Manchester, on a similar occasion, BUT MR. MARSDEN IS WRONG IN HIS LAW."

The preachers and many of the meeting shook hands very heartily with the expelled, and at a quarter to eleven the meeting broke up.

*Orders and Communications for the Watchman's Lantern will be received by the Editor, at the Office of the Association, No. 24, Clarendon Buildings, South John-street, Liverpool.*

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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No. 2.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31, 1834.

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## THE LATE MEETING AT LEEDS.

ON Wednesday evening, the 17th instant, a public meeting was held in the Music-hall, Leeds, for the purpose of explaining the objects and intentions of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, and of giving an account of those unconstitutional proceedings of the Conference which have rendered such an Association necessary. The members of the Methodist Society were admitted by their tickets. Although very full and accurate reports of this meeting have already appeared in the *Leeds Times* and the *Christian Advocate*, besides partial statements in other publications, we consider it too important, both in respect to the interest which it has excited, and in its probable consequences, to be passed over altogether without notice.

Our readers must understand that ever since the celebrated expulsion of the third part of the Society in Leeds, in 1827, that town has been considered as the head-quarters of Methodistical Toryism, and looked upon by the Conference party as their own peculiar province. That the still waters of this "Dead Sea" could ever be lashed into a storm; that a whisper of discontent should ever again be heard in Leeds, was a thing not to be dreamt of. It was thought by the preachers that surely the Leeds Methodists would heed not the "song of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." As the time for the meeting drew nigh, however, symptoms of terror began to manifest themselves. Denunciations were levelled from the pulpits on the devoted heads of those "wicked men, who, infected with the political mania of the times, divide and scatter religious societies," &c., and the people were warned, at their peril, not to attend the proposed meeting. The result was as might have been anticipated. The place of meeting was crowded to excess, and a feeling of intense interest was universally excited. Long before the business commenced, the orchestra and a considerable space round it was packed with persons avowedly hostile to the objects of the meeting. To this there could be no manner of objection; the intention of the speakers being to explain their motives, and avow their reasons for coming forward in that public manner. Neither could the asking of any questions, or the calling on any of the speakers for explanation, have been reasonably complained of. The sequel, however, proved that a calm and dispassionate attention, a patient hearing of what the speakers had to say, was the farthest possible remove from the inten-



tions of this party. Dr. Warren and Mr. Lees were in attendance from Manchester, Messrs. Rowland and Farrer from Liverpool, W. Smith, Esq. of Reddish-house, Stockport, and the Rev. John Gordon from Dudley. The meeting commenced by Mr. Gordon giving out the hymn, "Jesus, the word of mercy give;" after which Mr. Rowland engaged in prayer. Mr. John Wigglesworth, late steward in the Leeds east circuit, then moved that Mr. T. W. Hesketh, of Manchester, take the chair. Mr. M. Flower moved as an amendment that Mr. W. G. Scarth take the chair. Both the motions were seconded, and Mr. Scarth immediately climbed over the front of the orchestra, and took his seat in the chair. Here a scene of shameful confusion and uproar ensued, which it is impossible to describe, occasioned by the uncalled-for assumption of the chair by Mr. Scarth, and by the loud vociferations of some of his friends, who had stationed themselves in different parts of the saloon, a little way from the front of the orchestra. For some time it was utterly impossible for any speaker to obtain a hearing. Mr. Farrer, of Liverpool, was then requested to go forward, and having obtained something like silence, he stated that, as an individual, he would much rather Mr. Scarth were chairman of that meeting than any other person; but, as the meeting seemed to be of a different opinion, he would put it to the vote, which being done, there appeared a decisive majority in favour of Mr. Hesketh. Mr. Scarth, however, still seemed determined to retain possession of the chair, whilst the great majority of the audience were determined that he should not occupy it; and after the motion and amendment had been twice put, Mr. Scarth was obliged reluctantly to vacate it in favour of Mr. Hesketh.

Mr. D. ROWLAND then addressed the meeting in an eloquent and powerful speech, during the delivery of which he was assailed by Mr. Scarth and his party with vociferation and outcries of the most disgraceful description. One passage, and the incident which occurred in connexion with it, we will state:—"I have a little curiosity, Sir, (said Mr. Rowland,) to know whether any one of the authors of the Leeds addresses, or of the signers of those addresses, will have the face, will have the hardihood, will have the courage to take my place on this platform, and in his conscience, and on his honour, declare, in the face of this assembly, that the Conference has never violated any law." [Here the speaker paused, and on his left, a few yards from the platform, a cry issued, "There is one here," and the individuals who surrounded a gentleman whom we did not know, gave back, and endeavoured to force him towards the place where the speaker was standing. Mr. Rowland, looking towards the place, said, "Let him come up;" but after all, the courage of the person failed him, and he declined the offer.] Mr. Rowland again continued,—"It shall be known from one end of this land to the other, that a challenge has been given to any man, who has formed or signed the document emanating from these two circuits, to take his stand upon this platform, and in the face of this large congregation, and on his conscience, and on his honour, declare that the Conference has not violated any rule, and that that challenge has not been accepted."

The Rev. JOHN GORDON then delivered, amidst much opposition from the party mentioned above, the following address, which we insert entire, considering it peculiarly valuable at the present time, as exhibiting the principles which ought steadily to be kept in view in all attempts

at the reform of religious abuses :—I stand here, (said Mr. Gordon,) as an independent man, I stand here upon my own responsibility, and upon that responsibility alone. For the statements I am about to make, I am responsible to no association whatever. Will you not hear me state the truth? I come to serve no party. I come not to serve the purpose of the Manchester Association, but I come ready to prove the truth of every word that I say. If any gentleman chooses to question the statements which I may make, I will readily answer him. Can I say more to Englishmen? There are two things to which I wish to direct the attention of this meeting—there are two questions I wish to answer. The first of these questions is, “To what object should the authority of a Methodist Conference relate?” The second of these questions is, “With what limitations should the authority of the Methodist Conference be exercised?” Is not this a reasonable proposition? Is not this fair? Questions which concern every man who has the least connexion with Methodism in this or any other place. The first question, then, I propose to answer is this, “To what objects should the authority of the Wesleyan Conference relate?” I say such authority should relate solely and exclusively to religion; but I assert that it has not done so; I say the Methodist Conference has made itself a political union, and this I will demonstrate. What can a Christian church relate to but a religious object? Does the Bible say any thing about politics? Does the Bible speak about the connexion of church and state? Does it speak of a republic, or a monarchy, as the proper government of a country? (Cries of “No, no; hear hear.”) But the Methodist Conference does all this. I said the Methodist Conference had made itself a political union—yes, and the worst of all unions—a Tory political union. Gentlemen, here are two statements in this question which I will prove. The first is, that the Methodist Conference has declared that certain political opinions are Wesleyan; the second is, that the Wesleyan Conference has expelled a man for holding certain political opinions. (Interruption.) What, will you not hear me prove them? Do you mean you will not hear me read from the very book the Conference has published? I say they have there described certain political opinions are Wesleyan. (“No, no.”) Then let the person who says No, no, stand here, and I will answer him. (Cheers.) I will read the words out of the book, and let him hear what they are. It is there stated “That Brother J. R. Stephens has attended four public meetings at Ashton-under-Line, &c., one of the avowed objects of these meetings was to obtain the total separation of church and state; that at these meetings he delivered speeches expressive of his approbation of that object, and that these speeches of Brother Stephens are directly at variance with the general sentiments of Mr. Wesley and the Conference, and are distinguished by a spirit highly unbecoming a Wesleyan minister, and inconsistent with those sentiments of respect and affection towards the Church of England, which our Connexion from the beginning openly professed and honourably maintained.” It says, “that as far as his influence extends, Brother Stephens has committed the character of the Connexion, on a question involving its public credit, as well as its internal tranquillity.” There is the separation of church and state set against the public credit of the Wesleyan Connexion. (Interruption.) Am I not reading out of the book the men themselves have

published? There is my proof of the first position. My proof of the second position is derived from the Minutes, where it is stated, "that unless Brother Stephens gives a distinct pledge that he will abstain from all such proceedings in future, he will unavoidably terminate his ministerial connexion with the Conference," that is to say, that the man who advocates opinions involving the separation of church and state is to be expelled from the Conference. Tell me—Is this the Methodism which Mr. Wesley propagated? If there is one thing stated more distinctly and plainly than another, in the works of Mr. Wesley, it is that he and his connexion had but one object in view, viz., the salvation of souls. (Laughter from Mr. Scarth's friends.) Ah, laugh as you will, these are Mr. Wesley's own words:—[The substance of this extract was to the effect, that whether a man professed to believe universal or particular redemption, whether he was a Presbyterian, an Anabaptist, a Churchman or Dissenter, it formed no objection to his entering the Methodist society, the only required condition being a real desire to save his soul.]

MR. SCARTH rose once more and inquired—Does Mr. Gordon mean to say that Mr. Wesley says this of Methodist preachers?

MR. GORDON replied: I will prove to you that whatever statements of the Conference are published in their minutes they are binding upon the whole Society. I say Mr. Wesley asserts that any man, being a member of this Society, is independent of all political things; there is no sentiment required as to Methodists being Churchmen or Dissenters. The only thing which was necessary to being a member of this Society was a sincere desire to save their souls. I will prove to you that these Minutes go further than preachers. (Renewed interruption.) I don't stand here to serve any party, but to state what I believe in my heart to be the truth, and that is absolutely necessary for you to hear. I stand here to prevent, as far as it is in my little power to prevent, the Methodist connexion from stinking in the nostrils of the public. A gentleman says, these opinions do not relate to the people. (No; a preacher.) Oh, that they referred only to preachers! As far as Mr. Stephens is concerned, it is stated that he has committed the character of—what? of the Conference? no; but of the Connexion; (cries of "Hear, hear,") and in a question which, it is stated, involves its public credit. Will any man tell me, after this, that these are not Wesleyan opinions. The question is, whether the Methodist Conference has not departed from its proper authority, and has not joined itself to a political struggle, departing from its original object. ("No, it has not," from Mr. Scarth; "Stephens has," from a gentleman in the front.) I am not here to defend Mr. Stephens or any mortal man; I am not here even to defend myself, or to bring my own case before you, but to support and prove a principle. Out of their own mouths I will judge them. "The Conference gladly takes the present opportunity of publicly expressing its *entire satisfaction* (now, mark these words,) with the *great principles* which have been ably and faithfully maintained, during the past year, in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, under Mr. Jackson's superintendence; and requests that he will take the earliest opportunity of printing, in such form as he may judge expedient, the substance of the statement which he has made to the Conference, in *illustration and defence of those principles, and of the real sentiments*

*and conduct of Mr. Wesley, and of the Conference, since Mr. Wesley's removal from the head of our body, in relation to the Established Church of Great Britain and Ireland, and to certain questions connected therewith."*

It is stated here, that the principles which Mr. Jackson has defended on the subject of Church Establishments, are the principles which the Connexion maintains. In this question are involved not only the preachers, but the people. As a body, the Methodists have not clamoured for claims of low dissent—[the interruption prevented our hearing the whole of the sentence.] Mr. Gordon again said, I have not come here to advocate the separation of church and state, for I have a friendly disposition to the Established Church, which has been supported from the persuasion of its utility; and, under the present circumstances, the necessity of an established religion may be maintained as securing to the nation such an amount of religious instruction as could not be provided by the voluntary principle. I don't pledge one word in argument; but, according to these Minutes, this political question has been made the principle of the Conference. Is this right? Is this Gospel? Is this the religion of Jesus Christ? Any thing but that. Is this consistent? I say, when the Methodist Conference mixes itself in political matters, it comes in opposition to the principle on which it was constituted. I say, when the Conference does this, it commits an injury upon us who hold opposite principles to these: it tells a lie: it says the Methodist public are not what they are. I say, the Conference commits a public injury upon the people, especially at a time when there is a change of Ministry, occasioned by the very question here mooted: it represents the people of the Methodist body as being not what they are. I say, the Conference commits an injury upon you as a religious society, and brings political strife into your meetings. Did it not bring political debate into the District Meeting? I have endeavoured to answer this first question, and on the grounds of this reasoning I wish the Conference to acknowledge this principle. I would that the Conference and all other meetings should confine their business to subjects exclusively religious, abstaining from all interference with the local authorities connected with them. This, I say, is Christian doctrine.

The second question I propose to answer is this, under what limitations should the authority of Conference, the religious authority of Conference, be exercised? I say that the Deed of Declaration limits the authority of Conference to two points. Let any man prove to me, or read to me any paragraph which gives the Conference any authority but these two. First, to station preachers. Second, to admit and expel its own members. Let any man show me that any other power is given them except this. Look at the limitations I have now maintained, and see if they are not consistent with scripture truth and with common sense. These are two limitations which I wish the Conference to acknowledge as matters of principle. First, that all leaders, local preachers, trustees, and quarterly meetings, constituted according to Methodist law, are competent to conduct the business which properly belongs to them, without hindrance or authoritative interference on the part of the Conference or its representatives. (Interruption.) —I will prove this to you, certainly. I am not stating any thing for



which I should be accused, I am making no clap-trap speech ; am I not appealing, as I go along, both to the law and to reason ? and why should I be interrupted ? I say the second principle which Conference should acknowledge as a limitation of its power is this, that all new plans or rules that may be contemplated by the Conference, and which affect the body generally, shall be submitted to the people, and that no such plan or rule shall be considered legal amongst us until it has received the concurrence of the Societies. If there could be any cause for the authoritative interference of a Minister of the Gospel, it was in the case of the man who had committed an incestuous crime in the Corinthian church ;—did the Apostle Paul say he had expelled him ? did he write to the minister of the church of which he was a member to expel him ? No ; but he wrote to all the church that was at Corinth. And when the man repented of his sin and wickedness, and wished to be received back again into the church, did the Apostle Paul take upon himself the authority of admitting him ? No. Refer to 2 Cor. 2 chap., and take notice of the expressions, “ Whom you forgive, him I forgive also.” (Loud cheers.) Let the Minutes of Conference go to the winds of heaven, and be buried in the depths of the sea, if they stand in any way opposed to scriptural truth. (Tremendous applause.) Do you think there would be any contention in any of your leaders’ or local preachers’ meetings if this were acted upon ?—(cries of “ No, no”)—the minority would submit to the majority. The contention is often when the minority demand to have the power of settling the matter in opposition to the majority. I say the Methodist Conference meant to give this power. This is a Methodist law,—“ The leaders’ meeting shall have a right to declare any person, on trial, improper to be received into the society.” After such declaration, the Superintendent shall not admit such person, and no one shall be excluded, unless at a leaders’ meeting. I mean to say it was intended to give this power. (A cry of “ How do you know ?”) How do I know ! well, if that was not the intention it practised deceit. (Applause.) It is likewise stated that no person shall be appointed a leader or a steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with the leaders’ meeting. Can any one tell me that Conference would put these two rules in almost the same language, on the same page of the book, as containing laws by which they were governed ?—I say, will any man tell me that the Conference meant them in opposition to the leaders’ meeting, when the other rule (and which was acted upon) said, “ in conjunction with the leaders’ meeting ?” What was the case of Mr. Johnson, at Leeds, in 1827 ? (Cheers, and some interruption.) I do not wish to say whether he was or was not properly expelled ; I merely wish to call your attention to this fact, that the Conference insist upon another interpretation of the law, to what I consider consistent with its spirit. Mr. Johnson was brought before a local preachers’ meeting ; (he pleaded guilty.) Yes, he pleaded guilty ; but the meeting did not acknowledge the charge against him to be a crime. Did it, (turning to Mr. Scarth) Mr. Scarth ?

Mr. SCARTH replied,—They were never asked ; the law is decisive.

Mr. GORDON,—I know that ; yet the preachers’ meeting did not acknowledge this to be a crime. [You condemned such proceeding.] and condemn it ; but let any man bring any record which relates to

me. What did I do when I was in Leeds? I held my tongue. I am a man of peace, but I could bring evidence to prove that I thought then as I think now. I say that it must be within the knowledge of every one that Mr. Grindrod, in opposition to the voice of the local preachers' meeting, pronounced the matter in Mr. Johnson's case to be a crime. The Minutes of 1828, and the resolutions of the Leeds Special District Meeting are confirmed, and declare the very fact for which I am contending,—that the leaders' meeting was competent to conduct its own business; yet, for all that, I will prove to you that Conference has reserved to itself, beyond what happens in the leaders' meeting, the power of overruling their decisions. In the first place, the Conference have declared it law that a Superintendent can refuse to put any question which he may consider inconsistent with Methodism. And, secondly,—that the Superintendent may leave the chair if he thinks proper, and the Conference had declared, if he did leave the chair, that the meeting was dissolved. Then, I ask you, what authority upon earth have you, if this be the case? I need not repeat to you the principles upon which the members of Conference acted in the case of the Leeds Special District Meeting. I am not going to say they were or were not methodistical, that they were right or wrong, but I do say that they acted upon the principle of interfering in the local affairs of the Leeds circuit. In the Minutes of 1820 you will find it stated, that the leaders may represent to Conference things relative to their classes, and that these representations shall be attended to, but that they are not binding upon the Conference. The Conference is to judge between them, to hear what they have to say, and decide whether it is unjust or unscriptural, to talk about subjects relating to government. Are there no other passages of Scripture concerning authority? What does the word of God mean when it says, "The princes of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but it shall not be so amongst you?" (Cheers, and cries of "Hear, hear.") What does the Gospel say about Ministers of the Gospel, and to the Apostles who were sent forth by Christ himself? He said, "Be ye not called Rabbi, Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." If I were to sit down this night for the purpose of attempting to frame the strongest language which is in the compass of man's mind to select, to demonstrate that Ministers of the Gospel should be on an equality with their brethren, I could not find stronger than that to which I have referred; let any man disprove it, if he can—to the word and to the testimony I adhere.

There is another principle. I happen not to hold the opinions which the Central Association do on this particular point. (Hear, hear.) I stand here as an independent man. I went to Manchester, and asked permission to accompany Dr. Warren to this place, to state my opinions on certain points. I told them that I did not think their reforms final. They did allow me; therefore I came, in order that we might co-operate in seeking for those reforms which may be thought necessary and proper by the connexion at large, and if satisfactory to them, the plan on which these reforms can be obtained, I will submit to their opinions. I came here to say we are arrived at an awful crisis. I came here that the peace of the society may not be interrupted, and that the connexion itself may not crumble into ashes.

The last principle which I laid down was this, that all new plans and rules which were contemplated by Conference, and which affect the body generally, shall be submitted to the people; and that no such plan shall be considered legal until the concurrence of the society shall be given. I don't say in what way: I leave that to you. I state a Methodistic principle. Are we not a connexion? If a Conference rule be passed, it applies to one part of the connexion as well as the other. They say, in reference to this Theological Institution, that it does not affect the societies. What! are not the societies to have their ministers from it? Nay, will they have any who do not come from it? As a connexion, we don't choose our own ministers: they are sent us from and by the Conference. We are told we are a connexion, in Mr. Watson's pamphlets. He proves this by our having a common government. I understand, by a statement in that pamphlet, that the Conference has all the power to make the laws, to interpret the laws, and to execute the laws. No mortal man, nor any body of men, should ever have such a power or authority as that. (Loud cheers.) If such a power was connected with the Government of this country, what would the people of Leeds say to it? Surely, as a connexion, we have a right to give our concurrence to any new plans or rules which may be proposed by a Conference. There is a rule quoted by the Association, which says, "the society shall find out (whether right or wrong, it does not say) the manner in which these rules shall be formally brought before them, as business belonging to them." And it says, although declared to be bad law, and causing ever so much contention, it may be binding upon the people. You don't know what laws you are under. In 1801, after the Plan of Pacification, there are given two rules, which principally relate to the stationing of the preachers. You would suppose, to read the question and answer, that it referred only to the stationing of the preachers; but the second rule is as follows:—"We earnestly desire our brethren never to send any petition to Conference which shall in any way clash with our printed rules." Are such rules to be tolerated? (No, no.) Are such rules as these to be submitted to, when Conference exhibits its political authority? (Interruption.) How am I to discover what the Conference are doing until they send their printed rules? I close what I have to say. I do assure you, upon the word of an honest man, I have not said one quarter of what I intended. It is owing to many interruptions that I have not succeeded to my own satisfaction, in proving these points as clearly as I wished to do; but I can demonstrate that the Conference has violated every one of them. I call upon you to declare that it shall violate them no more.

Dr. WARREN then addressed the meeting, and gave a full, distinct, and clear explanation of the whole of his conduct in reference to the late proceedings both in and out of Conference.

Previous to Mr. Gordon's address, Mr. Scarth had proposed a resolution to the meeting to the effect that "the objects of the Methodist Association are uncalled for and unnecessary; that its proceedings are deceitful and wicked, and that no member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society can consistently become a member of the said Association." This motion the meeting would not suffer to be put, but when the people were in the act of dispersing, Mr. Scarth, amidst the general

confusion, called for a show of hands, when about one hundred hands were held up, one-tenth part of whom never heard a word that was uttered by the mover. By this time, some of the gentlemen from Manchester began distributing papers, and in the midst of this scramble, together with the cheering of Mr. Scarth's friends, and the noise occasioned by the assembly preparing for, and leaving the room, Mr. Scarth put the negative, when no one seemed to be attending; consequently scarcely any one heard, and no one voted against the motion; upon which Mr. Scarth, exerting his lungs to the utmost, declared the motion carried by a large majority. The meeting did not separate until nearly twelve o'clock.

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The intelligent editor of the *Leeds Times*, who has no connexion with either party, and who may, consequently, be supposed to be tolerably impartial, makes the following comments on the above most extraordinary proceedings:—"Our readers will perceive by the preposterous proceedings of certain parties, this meeting assumed the appearance rather of a bear garden or a convocation of the ruffian adherents of the prize-ring, than of a Christian assembly. Every man, and every set of men, have a right to a calm and dispassionate hearing when they are desirous of stating their sentiments, and especially in an apartment which they themselves have taken, and at a meeting which they themselves have collected. If their statements are to be resisted—if their principles are to be put down—if their conduct is to be exposed—let it be by fair and manly argument—let it be by honest, straightforward, and patient discussion. And if such discussions, if such arguments, if such principles, if such statements refer to religion, it is peculiarly necessary that they should all be made, and that they should all be conducted, in the temper of candour, in the decorum of mildness, and with the decencies of order.

"We have no wish to meddle with the question or questions at issue, but we must say, that the conduct of the parties who originated the truly disgraceful scene of Wednesday evening, deserves unequivocal and general condemnation. By this display of unhallowed dispositions, by the fury of their opposition, and the pertinacity of their resistance to what is fair and just, they have done more injury to their cause than they will be able very speedily to repair. A deeper impression of disgust has been excited among the inhabitants of this town, by the phrenzied violence of the principal disturbers of this meeting, than has been known for a considerable time. We believe that the impression thus produced, which under all the circumstances of the case must be denominated truly deplorable, will never be effaced."

We can only add, that if these men are the "friends of peace and good order," if this is the course of conduct to be adopted to restore union to the body, if these outrageous proceedings are approved of by the preachers, without using the words of our national Litany irreverently,—“from Conference Methodism and Conference Methodists, good Lord deliver us.”



## PROGRESS OF EXTERMINATION.

Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord.  
Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, against the pastors that feed my people, Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord.

JEREMIAH, xxiii. 1, 2.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

DEAR SIR,—Below I send you a report of the Leaders' Meeting held at Brunswick Chapel, on Thursday evening, the 25th instant, so far as regards my case. I am induced to do this from a persuasion that such *practical* demonstrations as are thereby furnished of the fact that the Preachers are resolved on the resumption of those powers so unscriptural in themselves, and so subversive of the just liberties of the church, which were solemnly relinquished to the righteous demands of our predecessors in 1797, form the best justification of the principles and objects of that Association of which I rejoice to profess myself a member.

It is proper to remark that, during the time I was speaking, I was repeatedly interrupted by Mr. Thos. Crook, and one or two other preachers' men, which interruptions, and several passages consequent thereon, I have omitted, in order to preserve the thread of the principal observations more entire and concise. At the same time I wish to express my obligations to Mr. Thomas Sands and the other members of the meeting for the gentlemanly and Christian manner in which I was treated by them, and which formed so remarkable a contrast to the vituperation and unwise zeal of the other supporters of the Superintendent. Permit me also to express the high sense I entertain of the very flattering testimony to my Methodistic character, which in that trying moment was volunteered by Mr. George Pennell, than whom there does not exist a more respectable and pious man in connexion with Wesleyan Methodism in Liverpool.

Yours, faithfully,

HENRY POOLEY, Jun.

Dec. 26, 1834.

### REPORT.

After the regular business of the meeting had been disposed of, Mr. Jackson inquired whether it was intended to hold a Leaders' Meeting in the ensuing week. On being answered, that in consequence of the Quarterly Meeting being fixed for the following Monday, there would be no Leaders' Meeting, he stated his wish that one should be held specially, since the Leaders were aware that there was a business to be settled between Mr. Pooley and himself, which could not be well delayed longer than another week. Brother Pooley had, by signing his name to a newspaper document, taken so decided a part in favour of the Association that had been so much talked of, that he (Mr. Jackson) could not think of passing it over. If, therefore, this meeting had no objection, he would appoint Thursday, the 1st of January, for the consideration of Mr. Pooley's case.

MR. POOLEY.—I have an objection to that, Sir; I see no necessity for deferring for a week that which can be as well settled to-night. I wish to be at peace, and hope you will not keep me and the meeting in hot water for the space of another week.

On receiving permission Mr. Pooley proceeded,

Circumstances that have lately transpired have convinced me that you need not occupy much time on my case, since the *days of Methodist law, and of the legal trial of members and officers are past and gone*. (Interruption by Mr. Crook.) I can prove what I am asserting; and I repeat it, that the day of legal trials is gone by. ("Proof, proof.") For proof I refer you to the expulsion of Mr. Greenhalgh, of Manchester. ("What have we to do with Manchester?") Then I will come nearer home, and refer you to what has lately transpired at Leeds-street. ("Were you there?") In not having been present I labour under a disadvantage, but if I state any thing wrong, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Sands, who were there, will, I hope, set me right.

The facts are briefly thus:—Mr. Rowland having been charged with certain alleged offences against Conference regulations, was summoned before the Leaders' Meeting, and was, in the face of that meeting, without its concurrence, ejected from the Society by the separate authority of the Superintendent. Other acts of a similar nature have since that time been perpetrated equally in violation of Methodist law.

Mr. JACKSON.—That is a charge against me. Does Mr. Pooley mean to put me on my trial before this meeting?

Mr. POOLEY.—Sir, I know Methodism better than to do so. Both you and I know that you cannot be placed on your trial here, therefore your question is useless.

Mr. JACKSON.—If Mr. Pooley has any charge to prefer against me, let him bring me before that tribunal to which I am amenable.

Mr. POOLEY.—That is a tribunal of Preachers only. ("What other would you try him by?") To that question I reply, that I would try him by the court appointed in the "Plan of Pacification." But to resume. I stated that my case need not occupy much of your time. My reason for so saying is grounded not only on what you have done with the Leeds-street brethren, but also on the fact that you, Sir, yourself, informed a member of my class that my case was already disposed of.

Mr. JACKSON.—I deny that I said so;—where is the person who will say that I used such words?

Mr. POOLEY.—The person is not in waiting, but I have no doubt of the truth of his statement;—passing by that, however, it can be matter of no surprise to any here that I join in the present effort to get back those rights and privileges which were *conceded* to the societies in 1797, and *resumed* at Leeds in 1827. Since the latter period, I have uniformly offered my most strenuous opposition to the claims to irresponsible power then set up, and which have been acted upon in too many instances since. I have only therefore to add, that I **BOLDLY AVOW MYSELF A MEMBER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION**; and having made this avowal, I leave you to act with me as you think proper.

Mr. THOMAS SANDS.—I have heard much of rights which have been violated by the Conference, and especially at Leeds in 1827; but for my part I cannot perceive any truth in such complaints. I should like to know which of Mr. Pooley's rights have been invaded, and what less privileges he possesses now than formerly. Let him point out any rule that has been broken, that we may see where injustice has been done.

Mr. POOLEY.—(drawing his class-book from his pocket)—There is nothing more easy, Sir. I will read you only the following law:—"No person shall be appointed a Leader or Society Steward but in conjunction with a Leaders' Meeting: the nomination to be in the Superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the Leaders' Meeting." Now, Sir, that rule is perfectly plain and easy to be understood by any man of common sense, and I ask you, was Mr. Greenhalgh tried by that law? *I ask you, Mr. Jackson, did you try Brother Rowland by it?*

Mr. JACKSON.—Do you mean to say that we are bound in all cases to try Leaders by that rule? Can we not, if we please, try them as private members?

Mr. POOLEY.—Unquestionably not. You are bound in all cases to try them on that rule, else why was such a law made? It was made purposely, in consideration of the onerous and responsible nature of a Leader's office; and who does not perceive how reasonable and just it is that such individuals should not be liable to expulsion from the Society in the same easy and informal way as a private member, who may have been only a few weeks connected with the Society? On these considerations it is expressly provided, by the rule in question, that not only shall a Leader's guilt be proved to the satisfaction of his brethren, but also that they shall concur in the penalty to be inflicted.

If it is at the option of any superintendent to act upon or dispense with this law, where is the security which it purports to be designed to give? To attempt to get rid of it, as you, Sir, did at Leeds-street, by a *side wind*, I declare to be *Jesuitical and dishonest!*

Mr. CROOK.—I will not sit here and listen to speeches such as this in reference to our esteemed Superintendent. He is incapable of acting in the manner imputed to him; and as to Mr. Pooley, since he has confessed himself a member of that Association which is disturbing the peace of the Society, and aiming at its entire destruction, I move that he be no longer considered a member of this Society.

Mr. POOLEY.—I deny the imputation thus cast on the Association. That body had a cause in which it originated. If, therefore, mischief have arisen, it lies at the door of the Conference, whose arbitrary and unjust proceedings have called it into being. I beseech Mr. Crook to "put the saddle on the right horse."

Mr. GEORGE PENNELL.—Admitting, which I am far from doing, that our brethren have erred in forming themselves into an Association, could not piety and wisdom have devised a better plan of reconciling these differences than by expelling them in this vexatious manner? The reason why Brother Pooley has thus expressed himself is, that he knew his case was disposed of before he came to the meeting. Sir, he knew what you would do from what you had done at Leeds-street, standing as he does upon the same ground as the brethren there. I, for one, protest against the expulsion of Brother Pooley from this meeting. I have known him for many years to be an upright, consistent man,—a very efficient member of this Society, and one who has been an honour to the Methodist body. I consider that you incur a very serious responsibility in expelling such a man.

Mr. JACKSON.—It is no matter how good and useful Mr. Pooley may have been formerly—what are ten or twelve years labour to build up the Society, if afterwards he begin to pull down what he has built? He has avowed himself a member of a self-con-



stituted Association, whose declared aim is to destroy the existence of the Methodist Society; whose designs are dark, malignant, and cruel. It is a system of persecution; it aims at starving to death its opponents, and that is just as bad as if it burnt them at the stake. Men who hold such sentiments as these should go away from us, and not put us to the trouble of expelling them. They have denounced the Conference as a corrupt body, composed of unprincipled men. They claim infallibility themselves, and declare their determination to coerce the Conference into their views, and yet they remain in communion with the same Conference;—how can such be honest men? They profess to be imitators of Martin Luther and the Reformers; why don't they do as Luther did, and go away from us before they proclaim us to be dishonest and corrupt?

MR. POOLEY.—Suffer me to correct you there; this point is matter of history, and here at least there can be no dispute. In 1520 Martin Luther began publicly to preach against the errors and corruptions of Rome, *within the Romish Church*, at Wittenberg; for seven years he continued preaching and writing against that Church before he withdrew from her communion, and even then he did so merely to avoid the penal consequences of excommunication. I therefore contend that in the line of conduct we are now following we are treading in the steps of Martin Luther—as you advise.

MR. MASON.—You had better put Mr. Crook's motion.

MR. POOLEY.—I have endeavoured to give you as little trouble as possible in my expulsion. I made at the outset a direct avowal of my opinions, which have not been hastily taken up,—which are *unchanged* after the lapse of many years, and which, as far as my present convictions extend, are *unchangeable*. I knew how vain it would be to resist your determination to expel me, and therefore I did not attempt it; but, when I was challenged to show what rule had been broken, and what privilege infringed, I did so, I think conclusively, and if that is not your opinion, will you, Sir, will Mr. Crook, will Mr. Sands, condescend to argue with me on the rule that I have read to you? or say, after what I have advanced, that it has not been violated?

MR. JACKSON.—What is the use of your talking about rules, when one of you, Mr. Rowland, has declared he had broken the laws and gloried in it?

MR. POOLEY.—No! no! he denied that the law to which you allude was *now* binding on the Society, and then, indeed, he gloried in breaking it; but even that *was after his expulsion*. For myself I maintain that I have broken no recognised law. Even my joining the Association was of *necessity*, and induced by your refusal to allow me liberty of speech in the Quarterly Meeting. I appeal to you if I did not, in your own parlour, declare to you that if you would give me a fair field in the Quarterly Meeting I would not join the Association, and I then said, that if you muzzled me in that meeting you should hear me elsewhere.

MR. JACKSON.—I say he gloried in having broken the law, and it is in vain for such men to desire remaining in connexion with us. Their professions with regard to Methodism are all *humbug*, while they are aiming to destroy the head and scatter the members. They have caused us to lose the whole of the winter; they have stopped the building of the Chapel in the north of the town; they are taking away our members by hundreds and by thousands, and I see no way of putting a stop to their proceedings but by cutting off all who continue in the combination.

This is a most painful duty to me (!) I would rather lose every thing I possess than have been put to the necessity of doing what I have done at Leeds-street, but I see no alternative. I wish they would go away quietly, but they will not. They want to continue *humbugging* us with professions of regard to that which they are deliberately injuring. I think it is high time that the connexion between Mr. Pooley and the Society should terminate, and I have therefore only to pronounce that *he is no longer a member of this Society*.

MR. POOLEY.—AND IN PRONOUNCING THOSE WORDS YOU FURNISH ANOTHER INSTANCE OF A DIRECT BREACH OF THE LAW WHICH I HAVE READ TO THE MEETING. I protest against this expulsion! for as much as *this meeting has neither pronounced me guilty nor concurred in my sentence!* Mr. Pooley then withdrew from the meeting.

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I have received the following note from the member of my class above referred to.

H. P.

To Mr. Pooley.

DEAR SIR,—I am much surprised to learn that Mr. Jackson last night denied having said to me that *your case was already decided*. That such were the *exact words* used by him in our interview on Saturday afternoon, I now solemnly affirm; and, if required, am willing to substantiate the same upon oath.

Yours, respectfully,

CHARLES FERGIE.

December 26, 1834.

## MR. SHIRLEY'S CASE.

In our last number we gave an abstract of the mock trial and expulsion of Mr. Wm. Shirley, class leader and local preacher in the Liverpool South Circuit, in connexion with those of Messrs. Farrer and Widdows. We are requested by Mr. Shirley to add the following particulars in reference to his case :—

At the Leaders' Meeting, held in the vestry of Mount Pleasant Chapel, on Tuesday, December 2,

Mr. JOHN FULFORD brought forward against Mr. Shirley the charge of belonging to an unconstitutional association, though he quoted no law that was broken, nor offered the slightest proof that the association was in any way contrary to the constitution of Methodism.

The Rev. JOHN S. STAMP then read from a newspaper an advertisement purporting to be signed by the committee of the Association, and amongst the names was found that of Mr. Shirley.

The Rev. G. MARSDEN then produced an extract from the Minutes of Conference, in 1796, (as quoted in page 11 in our last number) which he asserted had been violated by this Association.

Mr. SHIRLEY maintained that this minute, if ever it possessed the force of law, must have been abrogated, he having always understood that the regulations printed in the class books constituted the only laws to which the leaders and members were amenable, in proof of which he read the introduction to them. (See No. 1 of the "Lantern," note, page 8.)

This mode of defence the CHAIRMAN would not permit to proceed, when

Mr. SHIRLEY requested that if his case was decided on he had better cut him off at once; any thing like a fair trial being obviously out of the question. He also appealed to the brethren present for their testimony as to his character, his standing in the church, and his firm attachment to Methodism. He then cited the instances in which a hearing had been refused to subjects brought forward at the quarter days, particularly by Mr. McNICOL, at the last June Quarterly Meeting, to show that faction was not his motive, and that, by the refusal of fair discussion in the regular meetings, he was driven, unwillingly, to agitate these questions elsewhere. He likewise appealed to the meeting whether a person like Mr. Marsden, who had only been in the circuit a few months, or any other preacher, at most only a few years in a particular society, were as capable of forming a just judgment of the conduct of a leader as his brethren, who had known his conduct and his character for the greater part of his life? He, therefore, besought the Chairman to take the sense of the meeting, according to the plain common-sense meaning of the law, "No person shall be appointed a leader, or removed from his office, but in conjunction with the Leaders' Meeting, &c."

Here Mr. Marsden attempted to show, with the assistance of Mr. Stamp, that the Quarterly Meetings were open to free discussion, when a member of the meeting pointedly reminded him that he (Mr. M.) had told him quite the contrary, which fact the Reverend Gentleman could not, or did not, deny.

Mr. SHIRLEY then proceeded to show that the Minute of 1796 was repealed by the Concessions of 1797, and maintained that the same law which would prove the Association illegal would prove the meeting at Pitt-street Chapel, called by the preachers, illegal also.

This Mr. STAMP endeavoured to refute, by stating that the meeting at Pitt-street had the approbation of the Leaders' Meeting, but in this he utterly failed.

After a little further conversation, Mr. Marsden put the question to the meeting, "You, who are of opinion that the Association is contrary to the law of 1796, hold up your hands."

Mr. McFARLANE remonstrated against this mode of putting the question, stating that if only one or two hands were held up, both Mr. Shirley and the whole Association would be condemned at once; for in this way of putting it, no honest man could hold up his hand in the negative.

Several of the members, apparently disgusted at the proceedings, began to move away, when the Chairman insisted upon their remaining. About five hands were held up in the affirmative, and, of course, none on the contrary.

The CHAIRMAN then informed the meeting that he would defer passing sentence for a week, and that if Brother Shirley would call upon him in the course of the week, and signify his willingness to leave the Association, he might retain his office as usual.

On the 9th of December Mr. Shirley called on Mr. Marsden, and held a conversation with him of some length, in which Mr. Marsden endeavoured to prove the legality of his proceedings, stating that he could not have acted otherwise than he did, as he must be *accountable to the Conference* for his conduct. He also expressed great concern respecting what the opinions of the gentlemen in the news' rooms would be of Methodist preachers, after reading the advertisement in the "Liverpool Courier," replying to certain reflections cast upon the motives and conduct of the members of the Association, by the preachers in the Liverpool South Circuit, from the pulpits. Mr. Marsden did not, however, attempt to im-

pugn the truth of the statements made in the said advertisement. Mr. Shirley having refused to comply with Mr. Marsden's request to withdraw from the Association, attended at the Leaders' Meeting on Tuesday evening, December 9th, in company with Messrs. Far-  
rer and Widdows, when the proceedings took place as recorded in our last number, page 12.

## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—The sequel to the proceedings detailed in our last:—

On Wednesday evening, December the 17th, the members of Mr. D. Rowland's class, which has hitherto met in the vestry of Leeds-street Chapel, found the door closed against them. A week previous was the time appointed for the quarterly visitation by the preacher, on which day a note was sent to the effect that the meeting of the class, by the preacher, under existing circumstances, would be *postponed*. In this insulting and opprobrious manner have fifty-five members of the Methodist Society been forcibly ejected, not only without trial, but without the slightest inquiry as to their opinions. On the Monday previous the class under the care of Mr. Gleave, which met at the same place, likewise found the door shut upon them. They had, however, previously received their tickets. Good old John Pawson, in his dying letter to the Conference, says, "Never try to make the door of the church narrower than God has made the door of heaven." In this case the members found the *literal* door of the church or chapel, which we suppose is the same thing, not only narrow, but absolutely shut in their faces.

On Thursday evening, the 18th of December, the leaders assembled in the vestry of Leeds-street Chapel, as usual. Mr. Vernon, society steward, who had seated himself in a part of the room not usual, was requested by Mr. A. Barnes, the senior society steward, to open the meeting by singing and prayer. This he declined. Mr. Barnes then requested Mr. Rowland to perform this duty,—which request was complied with. After prayer, Mr. Barnes invited Mr. Vernon to take his place at the table, that the business of the meeting might be proceeded in.\* This he also declined, but he added he had a communication to make when the meeting would please to receive it. Mr. Rowland submitted to the meeting the propriety of then hearing Mr. Vernon's message, which being assented to, he stated that he had that day received a letter from Mr. Jackson, the contents of which were to be read to that Leaders' Meeting, and the substance of which was that as they (the meeting) had thought proper to protest against his decision at the previous meeting, he (Mr. Jackson) could not think of holding any further communication with them. Mr. Vernon further intimated that he then stood before the leaders in the character of a trustee, having been made one since the last Leaders' Meeting. He was further charged with a message from the trustees, to the effect that after the letter he had just read from Mr. Jackson, there being no travelling preachers then present, the meeting would be considered illegal, and their longer continuance on the trust premises would be regarded as a trespass. On this announcement, the brethren present, who had signed the protest, arose to retire. Before leaving the place, Mr. Barnes read the following note, addressed to Mr. Jackson:—

*Leeds-street Vestry.*

Rev. Sir,—In consequence of the vestry door being closed against the leaders and stewards, Brother David Rowland has kindly offered us a room in his house, in which to hold the Leaders' Meeting. We should be happy to see you there to take your place amongst us as Chairman.

On behalf of twenty-one leaders and stewards,

A. BARNES, Senior Steward.

This being approved of, Mr. Vernon was requested to be the bearer of the said note, with which he complied. As the leaders were retiring, Mr. Vernon requested Mr. Barnes not to remove the books out of the vestry, and also to deliver up the balance of cash in his hands, for the purpose of paying the rent of the Rev. Mr. Booth's house. In reply to this demand, Mr. Barnes stated that he was the servant of that meeting, and would be guided by their decision. He then requested the brethren to signify by their vote whether he should deliver up the books and cash as demanded. The meeting unanimously negatived both demands, and retired to the house of Mr. David Rowland, where their Leaders' Meeting was held in peace and harmony, though not favoured by the presence of a preacher.

Sunday, December 21st, was the day appointed by the Superintendent Preacher for the quarterly collection for the poor at Leeds-street Chapel, notice of which was given from the pulpit the week previously. When the stewards of the poor's fund went into the vestry for

\* During these transactions, one of the leaders accidentally casting his eyes up to one of the vestry windows, which looks into the yard of the preacher's house, perceived several faces anxiously peering in to watch the proceedings. The window being a considerable height from the ground, a ladder must have been in requisition. It would thus appear that eaves dropping is not peculiar to a single preacher in the Connexion.

the collecting boxes, as usual, they were informed that the trustees had given orders that the boxes were to be locked up, and that no collection was to be made. They accordingly retired, not without some misgivings,—being a considerable sum in advance, and having to meet weekly demands on the fund. After the sermon the Rev. Samuel Jackson, who officiated, stated that the love-feast which ought to have been held in the chapel in the afternoon of the same day, was, for particular reasons, postponed. Nothing, however, was mentioned respecting the collection. When the benediction was pronounced, at the conclusion of the service, Mr. BARNES (society steward) rose in the chapel, and stated to the congregation that as the stewards were not permitted to make the collection for the poor in the usual manner, they would stand in the chapel-yard to receive what the congregation were willing to give. This was accordingly done;—but being warned off the premises belonging to the chapel trust, they took their stand outside the gates, in the street.

In the evening a strong detachment of *Brunswickers*, consisting of Mr. Thomas Sands, Mr. John Deane, and others, was brought down to overawe the disaffected plebeians at Leeds-street. After the sermon Mr. Jackson read a note from the pulpit, to the effect that he was requested by the trustees to state that the collection was not postponed by them, but in consequence of the peculiar circumstances of the Society at present it was necessarily postponed, nevertheless the poor would have their allowances made as previously.\* For the same reason the usual love feast would also be postponed for the present. After the service, Mr. Barnes again made the same announcement as in the morning, and added that as the preachers had refused to hold the usual love feast, one would be held in the Music-hall, Bold-street, the next Sabbath afternoon. This announcement was received by the congregation with evident gratification, expressions of thankfulness were heard from the lips of many who have reason to bless God for “the voice of free grace.” The collection was made in the street, as in the morning; and, notwithstanding the very *gentlemanly* conduct of some of the strangers, who assailed the collectors with the most abusive language, about the usual amount was obtained.

On Sunday afternoon, the 28th instant, the love-feast took place in the Music-hall, Bold-street, according to announcement. Mr. David Rowland presided on the occasion. The large room was completely crowded in every part, not fewer than 1700 to 1800 persons being present. The members of the Methodist Society were admitted as usual by their tickets, but in consequence of so many members having recently been unjustly deprived of this privilege, the September tickets were allowed to admit on this occasion. The most delightful and animating feelings pervaded the whole assembly; the testimonies of religious experience were clear and decisive. Many of the oldest, most useful, and pious members of the Liverpool Societies, men of thirty, forty, and fifty years standing, came forward to express their attachment to the original principles of Methodism, their sympathy with their brethren at the present awful crisis, and their strong faith that the present clouds, which overshadow the religious horizon, would speedily be driven away, and the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing and peace in his beams. No jarring string was struck; not a word was heard breathing any thing but love and affection for all the people of God, and after one of the best love feasts ever witnessed in Liverpool, the meeting separated soon after five o'clock.

*Manchester.*—The warfare still continues to be waged with unabated vigour. The pamphlets on both sides the question are innumerable. Mr. William Dawson, of Barnbow, near Leeds, in his anxiety to have a tilt at Dr. Warren, much to the surprise, and, no doubt, grief, of his friends, and the laughter of his enemies, if he has any, has entered the lists as a *controversial writer*! Be advised, good farmer Dawson, tend thy haycocks and shear thy sheep in peace, but be not again tempted to tread the thorny paths of controversy. In it lieth not thy forte.

The Manchester first circuit still continues impregnable. Many desperate charges have been made by the preachers, but hitherto they have met with utter discomfiture.

*Carlisle.*—Extract of a letter from Carlisle dated December 23:—“Here we are going on well, having completely foiled the preacher in his attempts to exclude us; he was forced to come to and give us our tickets, and not attempt to fasten any charge upon any of the members. So much for union and determination. If we only keep united, the day is ours.”

*Rochdale.*—The independent leaders in Rochdale, who passed the celebrated resolutions at their last quarter-day, have written to the President of the Conference, requesting him to call together, without delay, the hundred preachers composing the legal Conference, to adopt some measures to allay the present excited state of the connexion. This, as might have been expected, he has refused to do. The preachers in Rochdale are anxious *now* that hostilities should cease on both sides; this, however, the noble-minded leaders refuse to accede to, until the *causes* of the hostilities are removed. We shall be glad to hear from our Rochdale friends.

*Dudley, Stourbridge, and the Neighbourhood.*—Four entire circuits in this neighbour-

\* Perhaps so;—but which poor? Would those poor members have been relieved who cleave through good and evil report to their faithful pastors and fathers in the Gospel, their beloved leaders—who visit them when sick, counsel them when in trouble, and lead them in the way of holiness? Or would it be confined to those who are willing to be dragged in triumph at the wheels of the Conference car, and handed over, like cattle, to any one the preacher may think proper to appoint? In the words of Dr. Bunting, “We do not require an answer.”



hood, under the able management of the Rev. John Gordon, are completely organized, and actuated by the utmost zeal in the cause of Methodist reform.

*Sheerness.*—An Association has been formed here under the auspices of the official members of Society to co-operate with the Central Committee. Their resolutions are advertised in the "Christian Advocate" of December 22.

*Cornwall.*—The Cornish men, who have been so opprobriously termed "the mob of Methodism," are awakening to a sense of their duty at the present crisis. T. P. Rosevear, Esq., of Barn Park-house, Boscastle, the personal friend of the late Dr. Clarke, and a genuine lover of Methodism, has been most indefatigable in spreading information on the present all absorbing topics. May his efforts be crowned with success. "We wish him good luck, in the name of the Lord."

We could add much more information from various quarters did our limits permit; but we shall take an early opportunity of laying before our readers a succinct account of the progress of the Association, and the present state of the Societies; in the meantime, we earnestly entreat all friends of original Methodism, all well-wishers to the progress of reformation, to unite with us by sending all the information they can communicate, and circulating the present publication as extensively as possible.

We have the pleasure to inform our readers that the circulation of our first number, in the course, too, of a very few days, amounts to nearly 10,000. This surely proves the excited state of feeling at present existing in our societies, and the intense desire for information. The "Watchman's Lantern" is published at its present low price that it may be accessible to the poorest member of society. Any profits which may arise will be devoted to the diffusion of information, and the progress of the work of the reform of abuses.

Since writing the above, letters of a most encouraging nature have been received by the Association, from Hull, Shrewsbury, Sunderland, Newark, Sittingbourne and Maidstone, Kent, Houghton, near Darlington, Heywood, Sheffield, Edinburgh, and circuits in the Cornwall district, which will be more particularly specified hereafter. The prospects of a reformation of the abuses in Methodism are brightening every day; already the fabric of tyranny begins to totter. Let the people raise their voices, and the walls of the spiritual Jericho must speedily crumble into ruins.

*Whitehaven.*—An erroneous statement respecting this circuit was inserted by mistake in a small part of our impression. The facts, as just received in a letter from that place, are briefly these:—The Superintendent Preacher called on one or two of the leading official members, to inform them that unless they withdrew their names from the Association, they would be expelled the Society. A meeting was immediately called of the leaders, trustees, and stewards in the circuit, at which it was unanimously resolved that, from the time the Superintendent took any steps to expel any official member contrary to rule, he might consider himself dismissed from his station.

It is in contemplation before long to call a meeting of representatives from the different circuits to meet in some central town, to agree upon a combined system of operations. Of this due notice will be given. In the meantime, let the friends of reformation be on the alert.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. R. B. Grindrod's obliging communication shall be inserted in our next. We shall be happy to receive the continuation.

Our friend T. H. has our thanks for his verses, but whilst our spiritual Zion has such reason to mourn, our harps must, for the present, be hung upon the willows.

We have been obliged to displace several articles prepared for the present number; the accounts of the important meeting at Leeds, and the expulsion of Mr. Pooley, not admitting of delay.

The trials and expulsion of Messrs. Joyce and Beynon, shall, if possible, be inserted in our next.

Mr. Taylor's Letter to the Rev. Mr. Marsden was received just as the "Lantern" was going to press.

Of course it is impossible to insert it this week. If Mr. Taylor does not previously publish it, we will insert it in our next.

Liverpool; printed for the Methodist Association, by EGERTON SMITH and Co., Lord-street, and sold by Messrs. SIMPKIN and MARSHALL, London; Mr. ROBERTS and Mr. STOREY, Market-street, Manchester; BEAN and SON, and HEATON, Briggate, Leeds; Mr. JOHN RAYNER, and Messrs. PURDON and BROWN, Hull; and by all other Booksellers.

Orders and Communications, (post paid,) may be addressed to the Secretaries of the Association, at the Committee-room, 24, Clarendon Buildings, Liverpool.

Agents are wanted in most of the Circuit Towns, for the sale of the "Watchman's Lantern" and the other publications of the Association. Applications, (post paid,) to be made as above.



# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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No. 3.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14, 1835.

Price 1½d.

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THE METHODIST MAGAZINE FOR JANUARY, 1835.

The Conference oracle, misnamed the "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," (if by that title the idea is intended to be conveyed that it expresses the sentiments of the Society at large,) is now before us. Like the roll of the book spread before the prophet of old, it is "written within and without with lamentations, and mourning, and woe." Including the declarations and letters of condolence inserted as advertisements, the present number contains no fewer than ten or eleven documents breathing defiance against the Association, and all connected with it, and holding up "their iniquitous attempts to subvert the *established discipline and order*" of the body to the contempt to which such eloquent declamations will no doubt speedily consign them. It must be confessed that the campaign of 1835 has opened with rather a formidable demonstration on the part of the Conference supporters. The weight of metal brought to bear on the enemy is, of course, expected to produce a sensation which will strike terror into the hearts of their opponents, and effectually silence all future opposition. Fortunately, however, *in this reflecting age*, notwithstanding all their noise and smoke, fulminations of this kind are become tolerably harmless. Declarations of attachment, however warm; oburgations, however lugubrious; abuse, however unsparing, will not pass muster with an enlightened public, in direct opposition to notorious breaches of faith and instances of misrule. The writers of the whole of these papers carefully eschew all direct reference to dates and facts, and wisely confine themselves to vague complaints and slanderous imputations. The description of a former document of a similar nature will apply to the whole of those now before us. They contain "assertion without proof, reasoning without logic, lamentation respecting differences without desire for conciliation, and apparent zeal for religion without evidence of piety."

We will now proceed to analyze a few of these official papers. First, we have a lengthy "Reply of the Circuit Stewards of York," to the resolutions of the Manchester First Circuit transmitted by Mr. William Wood. Being signed by the city and circuit stewards, apparently in their official capacity, the reader would naturally imagine that it had been sanctioned by the Leaders' Meeting. No such thing. They never even heard of it, until after it was published, and, we believe, a vote of censure was passed on their officious stewards for their forwardness. These writers acting, we suppose, on the principle that

"where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise,"

seem to have passed their days in a happy state of ignorance, both of

the laws of Methodism and the mode of their administration. They express "their *entire approval* of the manner in which the general laws and discipline of the Connexion have been hitherto administered." Preachers may be suspended or expelled, in direct defiance of the laws, at the arbitrary will of persons who combine in themselves the characters of accusers, jury, and judges: leaders may be degraded from their offices, and turned adrift without the shadow of a trial: private members may be cut off in thousands, at the fiat of an irresponsible despot: *n'importe*, it matters not; they find the yoke sits easy on their own necks, and they are satisfied. "In conformity with this declaration, they cannot but reprobate," &c. the whole proceedings of the Manchester First Circuit. The remainder of the "Reply" consists of "unmingled disapprobation," "*unfeigned surprise*," "abhorrence of the propositions," &c.; and concludes, as in duty bound, by "a firm determination to abide by the present constitution," as explained and frittered away by the Conference, "and to resist, by all the means within their power, the efforts now employed" to open their eyes, and procure for them religious liberty.

Next we have a nondescript declaration of certain local preachers in the London North Circuit. These gentry state "that the recent establishment of an institution for the better education of the junior preachers in the Connexion, has been made the occasion of an *organised attack* upon several of its funds, &c." From the tenor of this statement, one would suppose that Captain Rock or Swing had again revived, and, at the head of their *sans culottes*, meditated the capture of the treasury chest by a *coup de main*. These worthy members of the church *militant* are, we doubt not, prepared to do battle with "gun, bill, and blade," in defence of an "institution," one of the first fruits of which will be to dispense with their services, as local preachers, at the earliest possible period. As, however, the members of the Association only propose to "do what they will with their own," a practice sanctioned by very high authority, there hardly seems any occasion for all this pugnacity.

Next comes a resolution of trustees, stewards, and leaders, in the Sheffield East Circuit. These honest cutlers are "determined to resist, to the utmost of their power, the attempts at innovation which are now making, and which are, in many instances, instigated by men who have no connexion with the body, but who, *nevertheless*, are actuated by the most inveterate hostility to its interests." In the first place, this is a gross falsehood; but passing by that, mark the consistency. Ordinary observers would imagine that if the constitution of Methodism, as at present administered, be perfection itself, as its advocates would fain have us believe; if our "beloved ministers, generally, from their lengthened, consistent, and meritorious labours, are especially deserving of the confidence and affectionate support of the Connexion at large," "the inveterate hostility to its interests" here spoken of would more naturally be looked for from without rather than from within. But no; these Sheffield people tell us, in other words, dissatisfaction, complaint, and agitation, from members *in* the Society, is not at all surprising; but when "men who have no connexion with the body" are "*nevertheless*" of opinion that some improvement in the administration of its laws is absolutely necessary, they hold up their hands in pious horror. Does not this look something very like a confession that the much vaunted discipline of Methodism does not improve on better acquaintance?

Next comes an effusion from the classical regions of Bolton-le-Moors; after which, certain trustees, &c. from a place called Faversham, in Kent, which nine-tenths of our readers probably never heard of before, express "their determination to uphold, so far as in them lies, the *just* power of the Conference." In this determination we heartily concur, our only opposition being to the *unjust* power of the said Conference.

Certain trustees of Middlesex Chapel, Hackney-road, next "deeply regret that an Association is formed, the *avowed objects* of which are to overturn the form of church government in wisdom established by their venerated Founder, and *since conducted by the Conference*, to destroy the valuable institutions under the management of the committees appointed by the Conference," &c.; and that the distressing result of such measures would be, in case of their success, the complete "*upsetting*" of our present economy. If by our "present economy" is meant the power of the Conference and its representatives to do wrong with impunity, the sooner it is "*upset*," and re-established on principles more accordant with Scripture and reason, the better for the future stability of the Connexion. If the machine trundles on much longer under the guidance of its present directors, it will be "*upset*" with a vengeance, and the safety of the passengers endangered, if not destroyed.

Next appears a letter of condolence to the President of the Conference from five individuals in North Shields; after which a resolution of eighteen leaders and local preachers in Haverfordwest brings up the rear of this long array of loyal and dutiful addresses. The motives imputed to the Association by the authors of the remainder of these addresses are, in all conscience, vile enough; but these last, seemingly determined to outstrip all their competitors, at once consign all, and sundry, without benefit of clergy, to the influence of the Devil. "We cannot but view it (say they) as an effort made by the grand enemy of God and man, whereby he might effectually overturn that part of the Christian Church." This, we suppose, if not Christian charity, is, at least, Methodist liberality. They also express their "entire approval," "highest veneration," "esteem," "regard," &c. "for those excellent men who are the 'guardians' of our rights as Methodists." Be it so; these "excellent men" are, indeed, the *guardians* of our *rights*.\* They love these rights so well, and guard them so closely, that they seem determined to keep them all to themselves.

So much for the skirmishers; now for the "general declaration of the Methodist Preachers." Like Sempronius of old, "their voice is still for war." One would have thought that Ministers of the Gospel, finding discontent and dissatisfaction pervading the Societies, and discord rending the Connexion from side to side, would at least have condescended to stoop a little from the high elevation they have hitherto assumed, and try what conciliation would do, if they have no arguments to offer. But no; they tell us plainly, sooner shall the last leaf fall from the tree of Methodism than they will consent to forego one iota of their fancied "*rights*." The usefulness of the Connexion may be paralyzed, every bond of union may be loosened and severed by successive shocks of this description, each convulsive throe may consign thousands of precious souls to destruction, whilst "calm on

\* *Privileges*, he should have said.—See the *London Preachers' Declaration*; also, the "*General Declaration*" of the Preachers. The terms "*right*" and "*privilege*" are not quite synonymous.

tumult's wheel *they* sit," and view with apathy and indifference the raging storm on which a few words of peace from their lips would operate like oil on the troubled waters. *O tempora! O mores!* Shame, indelible, burning shame rest on such men! Are these ambassadors of the meek and lowly Jesus? Are these followers of Him "who will not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax?" Let them beware; the last leaf of the Sibyl may be bought too dear. They may conceal from their admirers, and even from themselves, for a time, their real position; they may temporarily stave off difficulty after difficulty, by arbitrary expedients,

"But come it will, the day decreed by Fates,—  
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates!)  
The day when thou, *proud Conference*, must bend,—  
Must see *thine influence* fail, thy glories end."

If ever a document carried with it its own refutation, it is the one now under consideration. "They firmly repel the calumnious allegation that the preachers are subject to a dominant usurpation," &c. Cannot even a child perceive that it is as easy (nay, much more easy,) for the dominant party, if such party there be, to procure signatures from their subservient tools to a declaration of this nature, as to carry any other measure? We have much more to add on this subject, but are reluctantly obliged to close, thus abruptly, our remarks, which shall be resumed in the next number.

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#### THE DOMINANT PARTY IN CONFERENCE.

The preachers in London and its vicinity, in their celebrated manifesto of the 25th of November, "distinctly and fully contradict the calumny that the body of the preachers are subservient to a dominant tyranny or party; and that, in violation of every honest and manly feeling, they often vote in opposition to their deliberate and conscientious conviction." In illustration of this *distinct and full contradiction*, we beg to relate, on the authority of Mr. Banks, of Leeds, the following conversation held between himself and one of the preachers, whose name is appended to the above declaration, as reported in the *Christian Advocate*. "How is it, Sir, that you preachers are so afraid of each other that you dare not speak out in Conference on important questions?" when Mr. H. replied, "You are mistaken; we are not afraid of each other, *but we are afraid of Bunting!*" And here let it be understood that there was evidently a misgiving, when I eagerly inquired how it was they were afraid of Bunting. No labour to turn the conversation or ward off the pointed question would do for me, when, in a lower tone of voice (lest some bird of the air should carry the tidings to Jabez) Mr. H. said, "*He (Bunting)* will send us to bad circuits;" adding "and you know the castigation I got from him in Conference." And yet this is one of the men who "indignantly repel the charge that the preachers offer—or that Mr. Bunting receives—any support involving servility on the one hand, or undue assumption on the other." Shame, where is thy blush!

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#### THE TITLE OF REVEREND.

In the spring of the year 1784, while at supper, at Whitehaven, with Mr. Wesley, in the course of conversation, Mr. George Whitfield observed to Mr. Wesley,—“Sir, I have seen a letter to one of our preachers, directed ‘The Reverend.’” Mr. Wesley instantly emphatically and indignantly exclaimed, “Reverend!” “Pray, Sir,” said Mr. G. Whitfield, “how came that title to be given to Christian ministers?” Mr. Wesley replied, “I believe it was one of the first corruptions that ever entered the Christian Church.” —*Christian Advocate*.



AN

## ADDRESS TO THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS OF ENGLAND.

*Containing Remarks on the Causes of the Present Differences existing in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion.*

BY R. B. GRINDROD.

"The constitution of Methodism was fixed by mutual agreement between the Members of the Conference and the 'Delegates of the People,' in 1795; and is found in what is commonly called, the 'Plan of Pacification.'"—*Fevers's Appeal*.

"Is this your Christian counsel?—Out upon ye! Heaven is above all yet; and there sits a Judge that no King can corrupt."—*Shakspeare*.

DEAR BRETHREN,—To you who compose so numerous and influential a body of Christians, I address the following remarks; and to your impartiality I appeal, in the spirit of a brother in Christ, for their serious and attentive consideration. The motives which have induced me thus to address you, are simple and sincere, and they arise, solely, from the desire of eliciting *truth*, and, by establishing *justice* to all, restoring *harmony* to the connexion.

It is, indeed, a subject of painful reflection, that proceedings of so serious a nature as those which have lately taken place in Manchester and elsewhere, should have occurred in any religious community; and it is a matter of more regret, that there either should have been sufficient grounds for such urgent measures as the aggrieved party have been necessitated to pursue; or, that the evils alluded to, having been once shown, there should be any longer reason to complain of their continuance. But, unfortunately for the peace of the Wesleyan Connexion, the measures of the Conference have not, of late years particularly, been either wise in themselves, or adapted to circumstances; and the rulers of Conference, prejudiced in particular views, have not pursued measures which have been, in any way, judicious or conciliatory. Such conduct has been displayed by means of its representatives in the present controversy respecting Dr. Warren. The least conciliation on the part of the preachers might, in the commencement, have prevented the present lamentably divided state of the society. But no;—it did not accord with their lofty and unbending views, and the consequences may, almost, entirely be attributed to them. They have, injudiciously, upheld their own illegitimate authority by measures unworthy of their station.

The various publications which emanate day by day, either directly or indirectly, from the preachers, regard us, who do not submit to their dictation, when we consider them erroneous in their views and oppressive in their proceedings, as rebellious in our conduct, and dishonest in our designs; and treat us rather as enemies, who are attempting to subvert and destroy what is pure and holy, rather than as friends, who desire, in connexion with them, to rectify what has been distorted, and to purify what has been corrupted. We are looked upon as unnatural children, because we cannot adopt what our consciences do not approve of; and as disturbers of society, because we wish, *at once*, to have those grievances redressed, which, if allowed to accumulate, might overwhelm and destroy the very institutions we so love, and I beg, most modestly to state, have so bountifully contributed to support.

It would be a difficult task, indeed, for a stranger, if he were inclined to make the attempt, to arrive, by means of the publications, at least, which almost daily issue from the press, at even a general knowledge of the present controversy, so contradictory are the circumstances narrated, and so bitter and personal is the style in which they are written. Day after day have we witnessed the walls of our streets covered with advertisements announcing new publications relative to this momentous question; and those who have read any portion of them, I am convinced will bear me out in the assertion. I cannot describe how disappointed and pained I have felt when, instead of discovering, as I anticipated, sound sense, solid argument, and Christian principles, almost every page displayed marks of the most wretched quibbling, vain sophistry, and personal invectives.\*

\* I allude more particularly to a most unfeeling tract issued some time ago, and entitled a "Farewell Address," written by the Rev. Valentine Ward, now Superintendent of the Missions in the West India Islands! Also to a bill *carefully plastered on the walls of Manchester*, announcing



Indeed, their entire drift, if we may judge from their contents, appears to be to degrade and bring contempt upon *one individual*, and to ruin him in the estimation of his brethren. They have, almost invariably, attacked men and not measures. This conduct is neither acting justly towards the public, nor, on the part of the writers, does it reflect very favourable impressions with regard to the purity of their motives, or the character of their piety. Such productions, coming from professing Christians, and Ministers of Christ, too, is a circumstance indeed to be lamented, and is not calculated to elevate the character of our ministers in the estimation of other denominations of Christians.

But, my Brethren, I have not yet observed that any one of these pamphlets enter into an examination of the cause of the present disunion; and this is so palpably evident that there appears to be a design in thus refraining from grappling with the main question.

It is not, as the writers of these publications would make it appear, simply *personal*, and confined to the offence of an *individual*, but, in the case of that individual, the direct violation of a solemn compact entered into between preachers and people in the years 1795 and 1797.

This, then, is the immediate cause of the present unfortunate differences,—differences which, I freely confess, the minds of Wesleyan Methodists have long been ripening for, in consequence of an undue and unscriptural power invested in the ministers of that Connexion composing their Conference.

Before I enter further into this subject it will be necessary for me to ascertain what is the relative position of pastor and congregation, as testified and laid down in the example of the apostles in the early period of the Christian Church.

To those who have any knowledge of Church History, it must not be unknown that the laws by which any body of Christians are governed are of the highest importance, involving, in a great degree, its present peace and prosperity, as well as the welfare and harmony of future generations. It was for this reason, no doubt, the Apostles, in the infancy of the Christian Church, gave certain examples, by which they regulated their conduct in the transaction of all important affairs. In all probability they foresaw that the future Churches would require such direction to be governed, in order to ensure their tranquillity and successful operations. This example was unhesitatingly and openly to request the co-operation of *laymen* in the transaction of all temporal affairs. That this was the case is unequivocally proved from the following passages. Did they see it necessary to have superintendents over the affairs of the infant church in Jerusalem? Then it is that they directed their attention, not to themselves certainly, but to the whole church, and said,—“It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch, whom they set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed they laid their hands upon them.” Had our Conference but followed this example, the present differences in the Methodist church could not have occurred.

In another place we find it recorded, in allusion to an important matter being discussed—“Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the *whole church*, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas, surnamed Barnabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren; and they wrote letters by them after this manner:—The apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles.”

Again, the apostles having received information that a sum of money had been contributed towards the relief of their brethren at Jerusalem, we read that St. Paul proceeded in modest terms to inform them, “When I come, whomsoever ye shall approve of by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem.” That this plan was adopted by more churches than the Corinthian, is further proved—“We have sent with him (Titus) the brother whose praise is

the Answer to Dr. Warren’s “Sufficient Reply,” and which displayed as its motto, “I now charge Dr. Warren with publishing A DIRECT FALSEHOOD in his pre-ent reply.” To this the Doctor has most satisfactorily replied, and refuted this base insinuation, to the satisfaction of all his friends, and to the dismay of his enemies. A perusal of these publications will suffice to show the spirit of the writers.

in the Gospel throughout all the churches; and not that only, but who was also *chosen of the churches* to travel with us with this grace (meaning gift) which is administered by us: providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

Another remarkable and strong passage is found in the first and second Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, where he is speaking of the man who had committed an incestuous crime, and who had afterwards repented of the deed, and shown sincere proofs of his repentance. St. Paul, in this instance, did not, not, as is evidenced in the 5th chapter of the 1st Epistle, on his own authority, and on his own responsibility, expel him, nor did he write to the pastor of that church to pass such a sentence.—No; but he addressed himself, in his epistle, to the assembled church—"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *when ye are gathered together*, (who but the whole church?) and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And afterwards he says—"For what have I to do to judge them also that are without; do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. *Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*" And when this man showed sincere marks of repentance, and wished again to be received into the bosom of the church, what was the conduct of St. Paul? Did he admit him without consulting with the church? No; for he says, "But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part; that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that, contrariwise, ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom *ye forgive any thing, I forgive also*: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ; *lest Satan should get an advantage of us*; for we are not ignorant of his devices."

The members of the Manchester District Committee would do well, after their act of suspension, (a suspension they well knew, under such circumstances, tantamount to expulsion,) to compare this conduct of St. Paul with their own unscriptural proceedings.

The passages I have quoted are, I think, incontrovertible proofs that the apostles associated themselves with laymen in all the important temporal affairs of the churches, or, indeed, left it almost entirely under their control. And of this they no doubt saw the necessity, and, amongst others, for the following reasons:—

1. They saw it necessary, being placed in so responsible a station, to free themselves from all suspicion. The world, they were aware, had many eyes, and would narrowly scrutinize their conduct. They therefore acted upon the precept they so frequently inculcated, viz. to avoid the least appearance of evil, in order that they might do extensive good.
2. They saw the great importance of placing the government of the church on a sound basis, so that the mutual rights of the preachers and people might be understood, and a salutary discipline be perpetuated through succeeding generations.
3. They were well aware that ministers, although men "set apart to God" for the instruction of mankind, were but men of like passions with other men, and, consequently, liable to err. They, no doubt, were also well informed of the history of the Jewish church, and of the evils and divisions likely to arise from ministerial domination and priestcraft.
4. Besides the foregoing reasons, they had, as ministers of Christ, higher and nobler objects in view than the mere assumption or possession of worldly power or pomp. They assuredly knew their office was to convert souls, and, consequently, to promote the kingdom of their blessed Redeemer, who had but so lately left them, and who had enforced upon them the necessity of attending to their spiritual duties.

Such appear to have been the general principles which actuated the apostles in their proceedings; and although we have no minute record of church government, we have amply sufficient to prove to every unprejudiced mind that laymen were associated with their ministers on all important occasions. The apostles, men of pure and fervid piety, had other matters to attend to than the mere collection and distribution of pounds, shillings, and pence; they therefore left the transaction of such matters to individuals more acquainted with the forms of the

world, and, consequently, more capable of undertaking this division of labour than themselves. Content if they obtained the common decencies and necessities of life, they laboured indefatigably in the vineyard of their Lord and Master, not, most certainly, in the expectation of reward in this world; not with the desire of worldly distinction, but animated with the glorious hope of saving their fellow-creatures from wickedness and spiritual death, and, on their own part, of laying up treasure in heaven.

I shall, in my next communication, take a review of the proceedings of the Wesleyan Conference, and more particularly for a short period after the death of Mr. Wesley.

### MR. BEYNON'S CASE.

We beg to call the attention of our readers to the following case, not so much on account of any peculiarity attending the circumstances of Mr. Beynon's expulsion, but to the clear, complete, and masterly defence of the principles of the Association which it was the means of eliciting from that gentleman. Were it at all necessary, we should be perfectly content to submit our cause to the decision of any impartial man, simply on the merits of the case now before us. "Woe worth the while!" alas! for the cause, to bolster up which it becomes necessary to drive away men of this character. Mr. Ashton, the Methodist attorney-general, might well exclaim that this defence, if published, "would scatter firebrands, arrows, and death." We trust it will. We hope that the firebrands will kindle a flame which will purge the impurities of our Connexion; that the arrows will penetrate to the core of the corruption, and carry death to every abuse.—EDIT.

### AN ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL AND EXPULSION FROM THE METHODIST SOCIETY OF MR. JOHN BEYNON, A LOCAL PREACHER AND TRUSTEE, AT WESLEY CHAPEL, IN LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT, ON THE 19TH DECEMBER, 1834.

The Rev. G. MARSDEN opened the case by stating that Mr. Beynon had been charged with being a member of the Wesleyan Association, and that upon the charge being preferred last Wednesday evening, Mr. Beynon demurred on the ground that the country Trustees of Woolton Chapel had not been summoned, the trial was accordingly postponed till that night; he therefore called upon some brother to bring the accusation.

Mr. ASHTON.—It is my painful duty to accuse Mr. Beynon of being a member of the Wesleyan Association.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Do you deny the charge, Brother Beynon?

Mr. BEYNON.—I presume I am now to plead to the indictment. I plead not guilty. To the best of my judgment and belief I have broken no existing law of Methodism.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Do you deny that you are a member of the Association?

Mr. ASHTON.—Do you deny it?

Mr. BEYNON.—To save you further trouble in the prosecution of your object, I at once admit that I am a member of the Association.—(Hear.) May I ask whether I am on my trial as a Local Preacher, or as a private member?

Mr. MARSDEN.—As a private member.

Mr. BEYNON.—I now demur to the legality of this proceeding, and protest that it is contrary to the law and usages of Methodism.

Mr. Chairman, I feel quite convinced that you will preserve the proper order of this meeting, and I hope nothing will occur on my part that may be construed into a breach of the peace, for any thing I shall say will not, I think, render it necessary that I should be turned out of this room.\*

[Mr. WILSON, Attorney-at-Law.—That will depend, Sir, upon how you behave!]

I throw myself upon the candour and forbearance of my brethren, deeply lamenting the absence of my esteemed friend, Mr. Taylor, whom no entreaty could prevail upon to be present, so greatly was he disgusted with the disagreeable occurrences which took place on the trial of Mr. Joyce. I will now sit down, as I think this is the time for any brother to speak on any question connected with the case now before them.—(After a pause,)

\* Allusion was here made to the fact that Mr. Joyce was forcibly turned out of the vestry after his trial on Wednesday evening last, by Mr. Wilson, on his own assumed authority as a Trustee of Wesley Chapel, and Mr. Joyce was moreover warned by him never to enter that Chapel again!

Mr. ASHTON said he should have been better pleased if Mr. Beynon had said something by way of showing cause why judgment should not be pronounced against him.\*

Mr. Beynon then entered upon his defence.

It was not my intention to take up much of your time in the shape of a defence, because I have no hope that any thing I can say will at all alter the decision which some of you have already come to on my case; but I owe it to you, my brethren, who are of a different opinion; I owe it to the Church; to every member of the Methodist Society composing that Church; and I owe it to myself, to state a few reasons for the line of conduct I have pursued, and for which I am arraigned before you this evening. I may read to you the principles which governed that great and good man Mr. Wesley, which he maintained with unshaken constancy to the happy close of a long and useful life. In the first Conference ever held, in 1744, these principles were discussed, and this was the decision:—"In speculative matters each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced. In every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience." The question was then asked, "Can a Christian submit any farther than this, to any man or number of men upon earth?" Here is the answer:—"It is undeniable he cannot, either to council, bishop, or convocation, and this is that grand principle of private judgment on which all the Reformers proceeded. Every man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account for himself to God." This, Sir, is the foundation on which my principles rest, and by which you and my brethren are to judge of my conduct, for I am determined to stand or fall by them. If they have not strength enough to support me under the sentence which will be passed upon me, then I have trusted to a broken reed.

It is well known that Mr. Wesley governed the people which, under God, were raised by him, with sole and absolute authority: an authority which he never saw reason to relinquish while he lived, *nor did he delegate it to any others when he died*. He foresaw that the assumption of this authority would hazard the existence of the Connexion. Very soon after his death, however, disputes ran high on the subject of administering the sacrament, service in church hours, *the power of the preachers*, and the admission of lay representatives into the Conference; the end of all this was, the people demanded a constitution, and they got one in 1795, in what is commonly known by the term "Plan of Pacification." This was not obtained without an arduous struggle; but did it, as the Conference of that year expresses it, lay a solid foundation for lasting peace and unity? It did not. By the time the next Conference came round, in 1796, it was evident that the people were still dissatisfied; meetings were held in various parts of the country, and it was soon apparent that too much power yet remained in the hands of the preachers. What was done in this state of affairs? Why, the Conference once more tried the strong arm of coercive authority, and they passed this very obnoxious law by which the three brethren were expelled at the Mount last week, and under pretence of breaking which I am brought before you to suffer the same penalty. Well, then, after this it might be supposed the people could no longer make any resistance, but the fact need only be mentioned to show the contrary, for when the Conference met in the following year, they found 200 lay delegates assembled at Leeds, who there, in the name of the people, demanded a hearing of their grievances. Now I ask, Sir, did the Conference acknowledge this illegal meeting, the rebels, and Radicals, (as they are now called,) of that day? Most certainly they did; and mark this, brethren, they treated with them while they held the weapons of rebellion in their hands; they entered into negotiations with these delegates; they granted them all they asked, and solemnly ratified and signed a treaty of peace, to be sacredly observed by all the parties concerned. This is the great Magna Charta of our Methodistical liberties, and is generally called the Concessions of 1797. I have been the more particular in adverting to these facts, to show you when and how we obtained our constitution. I now proceed to the proof that the law of 1796 is no law in Methodism, and all the proof that is necessary is a reference to the public documents of the Conference itself. The law in question† was clearly, literally, and virtually rescinded and repealed by the concessions just alluded to. I will now read to you the amended explanation of this law, and you will find it under Sec. IV. 1, 2, 3, 4, of the Minutes of Conference for the year 1797:—

"In compliance with a request made by the committee of persons from various parts, (i. e. the delegates,) viz. that the Conference be requested to *reconsider* and *revise* those rules which relate to the *calling of meetings*, &c., made last year, (4.) we have agreed upon the following explanation, viz.‡"

Now, Sir, what becomes of this famous law of 1796, by which you are expelling the members of the Association? Why, it is frittered down to mere matter of opinion, and ceases to have any definite penalty attached to it.

The Conference profess to be as "tender as possible" in the new form of legislation which they saw necessary to adopt; but why did they touch the subject so carefully? It was, Sir, because the great question of our civil and religious liberties was involved in it. Upon the principle of private judgment, as stated by Mr. Wesley, our forefathers rejected the law of 1796, as an invasion upon their rights and privileges as men, and as Christians.

\* The vote on the law was taken at a former meeting, at which Mr. Beynon was not present.

† Let no man or number of men in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do any thing new, till it has been first appointed by the Conference.

‡ See Minutes of Conference Vol. I., page 376.



The legal gentlemen present, (Mr. Crook and Mr. Wilson,) will admit that an Act of Parliament, or any part thereof, is no longer in force after it has been altered, amended, and explained by another act, and this must be the common-sense view of the question before us. (Mr. Wilson said, "No one would think otherwise, except he was a fool;" a compliment not so intended, no doubt, but which was applicable only to the chairman.) Let it be supposed, for argument's sake, that this repealed law is still in force; is there no redeeming principle in it? is there nothing in it that admits of extenuation? Surely, standing as part and parcel of a code of laws to govern a Christian church, we might naturally expect, that even in its severest interpretation, there would be room for the exercise of some moderation in its application to me and my brethren. Admitting it never to have been repealed, it would not be an isolated law, for it would stand in connexion with others equally binding upon the parties for whose government they were intended.

The Conference of this year, 1797, selected all the ancient rules which existed previous to Mr. Wesley's death, and solemnly signed them; and in their letter to the Societies, they say, "we have *voluntarily* and in *good faith* signed our names to these rules, approving of them, and engaging to comply with the aforesaid collection of rules, or code of laws, God being our helper." This important document was signed by 145 preachers in Full Connexion, and the same is now required from every candidate on his regular entrance upon the ministry amongst us. You will observe from this, brethren, that there are laws both for preachers and members, and the argument I wish to draw your attention to is this, that the preachers ought to be most merciful in the use or interpretation of the laws affecting the people: for it would be an easy matter with me to take "the *large Minutes*," and go over them for the purpose of showing that the Conference have departed not from the letter merely, but from the spirit of some of the rules, which, as you have heard, were solemnly signed by them.

I now come to the charge preferred against me,—that of being a member of the Wesleyan Association. So jealous, Sir, are the laws of England over the liberty of the subject, that even upon a charge of unlawful and treasonable conspiracy, a man cannot be convicted but upon the clearest evidence; and were I or any other expelled brother to throw ourselves upon the laws of our country for any damage we might sustain in consequence thereof, we should obtain redress. I shall not do that, Sir. I prefer leaving it to the decision of the Methodist public; they will judge, and they *shall* have the opportunity of judging whether my expulsion has been in accordance with the principles of strict and impartial justice. Whether I am a member of the Association or not makes no difference, for I should in either case approve of its objects, and I can tell you, Sir, that numbers (and they are daily increasing) who are not members do the same.

I justify the Association on the ground of necessity, because its expressed object is to obtain a redress of grievances, and these are few in number. It is required that the constituted laws of our body be fairly, impartially, and duly administered; but since the year 1827, it may be said that we are without a constitution; at least it is in abeyance. In that year the Conference resumed the power which they gave up in 1797, and if you, my brethren, are not aware of it, I will now tell you that this very power is that which is now acted upon in Liverpool, and under which I shall be crushed if you, the leaders and officers in this meeting, do not stand up and assert your rights. In mentioning 1827, I do it in reference to the memorable Leeds affair, when, rather than submit to the decision of that extraordinary District Meeting, one thousand members withdrew from our Society in that place. That event, Sir, shook the Connexion from its centre to its circumference, and it has never recovered a settled state to the present time. The confirmation of that act by the Conference was an illegal assumption of power not at all belonging to it: the people loudly denounced it at the time, and it is the cause of all the discontent that has prevailed, and which does now prevail, in the Connexion.

We have, indeed, been told all along, even down to the suspension of Dr. Warren, that the Connexion was never more quiet,—nothing but peace, harmony, and unanimity prevailed. If this had been true, and had there been no premonition of the result, we might well be astonished at seeing the Association start into existence, as if by magic. Can it be possible that, without some latent or existing cause, the Association could have become so extensively popular as it has in so short a period,—a few weeks only? That man's mind must be strangely warped with party prejudice who denies that a cause for this excitement exists somewhere. Let the party whose business it is to concede the remedy see to it in time; they have the power to annihilate the Association without the sacrifice of any principle that is worth a rush.

The Association can be justified on the ground of precedent; that precedent I have already alluded to. This is not the first time the people have associated together to assert and vindicate their connexional rights and privileges. I dismiss this part of the subject by saying that the delegates of 1835 will meet the Conference under different circumstances from those of their predecessors. They, in 1795, met to demand a constitution: all we shall want will be a restoration of the old one. Time will only discover whether more may not be obtained than it is now the intention of asking for.

On one other ground I can justify the Association, and that is, the right of petitioning. I have attended our Quarterly Meetings for the last twenty years. Generally I have been a quiet spectator in them; but I have narrowly watched the proceedings, and I must



declare that freedom of discussion is under more restraint than in any other meetings that I am acquainted with. Any matters relating to the Conference are carefully evaded, and all attempts to discuss its legislative enactments are summarily put down. Before a petition can be agreed upon, it ought to be submitted to a close and deliberate examination; but of what use would that discussion be, if a previous determination exists in the mind of the chairman that he will not put the question, "that it do pass," to the vote, in that meeting? This is not an unfrequent case: it is one which I have myself witnessed. Now, Sir, this is the great radical grievance. We cannot reach the Conference, because the legal avenue, through the Quarterly Meeting, is closed against us. What, then, is to be done? We have the clear, indefeasible right to petition; and we boldly assert that right, in the face of all opposition, and the Association will now carry this our petition to the door of Conference, and present it themselves. And can you blame them for it, since it is the last resource that is left them? If the people cannot be heard through "the medium of their public officers," then they must be heard in another way. Our free government recognises and bestows the right of petitioning on every subject in the realm. If I am aggrieved, I can present, through my representative, a petition to the House of Commons, on any day of its sittings, without let or hindrance. The same right is conceded by all the other institutions of our country; and I could mention instances of personal benefit that I have derived in the exercise of my undisputed right to petition, as an individual holding an office under Government.

I have now to conclude my defence by requesting your permission to address a few remarks to you, Sir, as parting words. I deeply lament the present agitated state of our society. But it may be asked, have you taken the right course to stop the waters of strife and contention that have broken out? Severity never did, and never can, conciliate the affections of human beings, especially if they have strong impressions that what they suffer, they suffer wrongfully. By cutting off leaders, you cut off members also; and you must immolate 50,000 at least before Conference comes round; and if you persist in driving these precious souls out, how can you tell that 50,000 more will not voluntarily follow them into banishment and exile from their former home? I am only an individual in the great family, but I have a character and a name to support in civil society. I am not afraid, Sir, that my expulsion will in the least affect the estimation in which I am held by my brethren, or those who know me best. If the withering hand of disgrace is sought to be laid upon me, it will fail in its purpose, for it will find no material of a congenial nature upon which a mark of degradation can be affixed. But, Sir, there are higher reasons why you should pause before you proceed to extremities in my case. God has committed to me, as well as to you, the ministry of the word of reconciliation. I have exercised that ministry for the space of nineteen years, with some little degree of acceptance. I have not disgraced the cause of my God: my conscience this moment is at peace. There is no accusing spirit here ready to record any thing that I have knowingly done to be wrong as to the charge for which I am arraigned at your bar. At most, Sir, it is matter of opinion. I cannot alter the convictions of my own understanding; and should I, therefore, be condemned for asking that which reasonable men ought not to withhold?

To some of you, my brethren, before whom I stand, I beg to say that I was sorry to hear that you have already voted on the supposed law of the case upon which I am under trial. By that act you have prejudged the matter, and you have done that which no honest jury would have done in his Majesty's dominions; you had no evidence of the facts of the charge before you, nor did you know the line of defence which I should take to vindicate my innocence. The transaction connected with this affair will have to pass the scrutiny of another day—the judge, the jury, and the prisoner must all give an account of themselves to God, the Judge of all the earth. He will do right, because he judgeth righteous judgment.

To you, my dear brethren, who had the honest patriotism not to lift a hand against me, I heartily, I sincerely offer my thanks. You suspended your judgment till the moment you could exercise it independently, coolly, and dispassionately; in this you have acted nobly. Yours will be the enviable distinction of having come to an impartial decision. You were not the men who would sacrifice your opinions at the shrine of party prejudice, and you will go out from this court with clean hands, applauded by your own consciences and justified in the sight of a discerning public, inasmuch as they will judge that your conduct was generous and praiseworthy.

Most of you, indeed I may say all of you, know my manner and conversation of life. I have gone in and out before you; whatever branch of duty has been assigned to me, I have performed it to the best of my ability; you have mostly found me at my post. To my Leader and my Band-brother, who are present, I can appeal if ever they saw any thing contrary to the character of Christianity in my intercourse with them. (Mr. Coulthurst and Mr. J. Russell here said, "Never, never.")

Among you I have passed a few of the happiest years of my life. Methodism is the same every where. I love it wherever I find it; but I must say that I have breathed more of its genuine spirit in communion with you than I ever did before. Accommodating the language of the poet, from his country to my religion, I say, and I say it emphatically,— "Methodism, with all thy faults I love thee still." Yes, I will identify myself with Methodism while I have any being: nothing shall shake me off from it. I will cling to it while

I live; and, grasping it in death, I will shout, "Glory to God," for through my dying Redeemer it hath saved me.

I now finish my case, having justified myself before God, before you, and before the bar of my own conscience. Had I to do with a civil jury I should not doubt that a verdict would be given in my favour, although the law requires that they should be unanimous in their opinion. Here the case is somewhat different; for if only one, two, or three hands are held up, it is deemed sufficient to proceed to the awful act of excommunication. From such law as this, fit only to be classed with that of the dark ages, I would devoutly pray, "Good Lord deliver us." I close my defence under an impression that will go down with me to the grave, and I solemnly assert it, in the presence of you all, that I believe the whole of this proceeding to be illegal and unconstitutional, that it is contrary to all Methodist law and usage, and not agreeable to the laws of God or man. I record my protest against it, for the following reasons:—

1.—Because no charge of immorality has been proved against me.

2.—Because, contrary to the established law and usages of Methodism, I have been denied the right of a trial before my peers, the local preachers.

3.—Because, since there is no express law in Methodism strong enough to bear upon what is called illegal meetings, I have been tried by a law no longer in existence, but is become obsolete and inoperative by the laws of Pacification passed in 1795 and 1797.

Mr. MARSDEN then made a few remarks, and said *the law of 1796, was never abrogated, but was still in force*, and then proceeded to read part of a letter from Mr. Beynon, which was sent to state his reasons for not attending the first night that his trial was to come on. He then said, "We never expel any one for mere opinion on our church government."

Mr. BEYNON.—I think, Sir, it will come to that.

Mr. MARSDEN then read the law of 1796, and as the vote was taken upon it on a former evening, (when Mr. Beynon was not present,) it was not again voted upon.

Mr. COULTHURST then moved that the question of expulsion be put to the vote in the usual manner, according to the practice hitherto observed, that is, to take the sense of the meeting, and the majority to decide upon expulsion or not.

Mr. MARSDEN.—No, we cannot do that. Our Brother Beynon is now expelled, but he will have till next Monday evening to say whether he will withdraw from the Association or not.

The Rev. J. DIXON said that he had intended to make a few remarks on Mr. Beynon's defence, but as he had declined doing so, he would only observe, that he had had the privilege of hearing many speeches, and it had occurred to him, that some of these speeches, for instance those delivered in the House of Commons, were intended to produce an impression within, and some he believed were intended to make an impression *without*. Now he thought that the speech that they had just heard was of the latter description, and he should put it to Mr. Beynon to say whether it was not his intention to give it to the public by means of the press?

Mr. BEYNON replied that he would return Mr. Dixon the same answer which *he* thought proper to give Mr. Beynon in a debate on the misappropriation of the funds of the Missionary Society; and the answer was, "I do not feel inclined to go into that question."

Mr. ASHTON characterized the defence as being very seditious, although he did not attempt to controvert a single statement in it, and moved (seconded by Mr. Stamp) that the meeting should pass a vote that Mr. Beynon be restrained from publishing his defence; for he said it would scatter firebrands, arrows, and death among the people. The motion was put and carried, and Mr. Beynon pledged himself to comply only for one week, the time given him to return a final answer on the question of his expulsion.

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#### TO THE REV. JOSHUA MARSDEN.

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REV. SIR.—In consequence of a letter which appeared in the *Manchester Chronicle*, dated December 15, 1834, and signed by yourself, having had some previous knowledge of you, and forming, as I did, the highest opinion of your piety, intelligence, and independent principles, I was led to a careful perusal of the document, and, in conclusion, to ask myself the question—how far is the spirit and temper of this letter consistent with the high opinion which I have been led to form of its author? I am sorry to say that the impression was of the most unfavourable kind; and I could only view such a production as emanating from a mind either grossly ignorant of the parties who formed the members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, or, if not ignorant, guilty of bearing false witness, which ought to make any man, much less a minister of Christ, blush with shame. I would ask, in the first place,—what is the impression which your letter is calculated to produce upon the minds of strangers? Why, Sir, according to the tenor of it, the men who form the Association must be a set of the most diabolical beings in the world, guilty of lying and slandering, backbiting and tale-bearing; nay, you even go so far as to charge them with theft and forgery. You exhibit them to public view as a set of spies, whose object is to undermine

the foundation of our constitution, and introduce in its stead a polity at variance with every thing which now constitutes the bulwark of Methodism. Sir, if every thing you say were true, and could be proved against these individuals, it is very probable they would be transported beyond the seas, or hung upon a gallows, as not being fit to live. And will it be believed that these charges are uttered by a man professing to be a minister of Christ, and that, too, without bringing one single proof to substantiate his *vile assertions*? Will it be believed, I say, that these charges are brought against men whose respectability, piety, intelligence, and usefulness, have never been called in question by those who know them, many of whom have laboured in the church of Christ, and that without fee or reward, as long a period as the Rev. Joshua Marsden? Oh, I would ask, does this line of conduct correspond with that charity which ought to be the most prominent feature in the conduct of a Christian minister? What will the world think about Methodist preachers who can thus, without any provocation, falsify and blast the character of their brethren? Yes, Sir, I again repeat it, without any provocation. For what is it that has induced you thus to render yourself conspicuous for slander? You say the Wesleyan Association did you the unmerited honour of a vote of thanks for what never existed, and never can exist, with your present views and feelings. Then is it common for individuals who have conducted themselves in a way worthy to be commended to go and solicit a vote of thanks from the parties who might be pleased or benefited by their conduct? I will leave you to answer this question, should you feel disposed to publish another letter. But why did the Association presume to send you a vote of thanks? By referring to the resolution, I find that the thanks of the meeting were given to the Rev. Joshua Marsden and others, for their impartial conduct in the chair, at their respective quarterly meetings. At this you take offence, and tell us that such thanks were unmerited. If so, you must have been partial, consequently deserved censure instead of thanks; nay, you go farther, and say that it never existed, that is, (if I understand you aright,) that you never were impartial, and never can be, with your present views and feelings. Whatever part of your letter I might be inclined to call in question, I verily believe that the above sentences are the real sentiments of your heart; and if such views and feelings be a fair sample of what really does exist in the minds of your brethren in the ministry, it is no wonder that the Methodist Society should now be in a state of the greatest excitement. This was the sum and substance of what the Association did. They sent you a vote of thanks for what they believed to be your impartial conduct in the chair: but you indignantly tell us that this was unmerited; and because they were thus mistaken you treat them as the vilest, the most dishonest, the most deceitful, and the most dishonourable men in the world: but I repel your charges, and challenge you to the proof. The men whom you so unfoundedly calumniate court investigation; they call upon the world to examine their claims. We wish the whole connexion of Wesleyan Methodists to become acquainted with their rights; to examine them on the ground of reason, of Scripture, and of common sense. We are bold to affirm that we have as much respect for genuine Methodism as the Rev. Joshua Marsden, or any member of the Methodist Conference. All we want is Methodism in its simplicity, Methodism in its purity, Scriptural Methodism, Methodism that will commend itself to every man's conscience, Methodism that will reflect honour on its ministers, Methodism that will confer blessings on the people, and Methodism that will bear the test of investigation.

It would be easy to show the inconsistency of the whole of your letter, as applicable to the Wesleyan Methodist Association, but I have neither time nor patience to do so; but supposing it were otherwise, I conceive it to be unnecessary. It carries its mark upon its forehead; and I have no doubt but the discerning and impartial portion of the Wesleyan body will heap upon it that contempt which it so richly merits. We conceive that the New York anecdote which you say is applicable to your case is equally so to any of the members of the Association; and so far from wishing you, or any other Wesleyan Methodist, to renounce allegiance to Christ and his cause, or, in other words, to renounce genuine Wesleyan Methodism, we can affirm, in the most serious and solemn manner, that our object in forming the Wesleyan Methodist Association was to preserve its members, that is to say, the members of the Methodist body, from deserting its ranks. Hence we invariably recommend each member to continue in the old body, believing, as we do, that the Conference will be convinced of the necessity of making such arrangements as to the government of the Connexion as shall be satisfactory to the people, and consistent with the spirit of the letter and law of Methodism.

I shall now take my leave, and conclude my few remarks by stating (and I think it an honour to do so) that I am a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, and being appointed a member of the committee, it naturally follows that I must have some idea of its operations; and I am perfectly satisfied that any opposition such as that couched in your letter will never retard the progress of Methodistical reforms, or heal the breach already made in the church. Sincerely hoping that the time is not far distant when every cause of dissatisfaction shall be removed, and our beloved Connexion be restored to unity and peace,

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Yours, respectfully,

THOMAS TAYLOR,

Trustee and Local Preacher in the Manchester First Circuit.

3, Mason-street, Dec. 27, 1834.

## MR. VEVERS'S SECOND APPEAL.

The Rev. Mr. Vevers has just published a sixpenny pamphlet in reply to the "Affectionate Address of the Association." A rejoinder to this "Second Appeal" is in course of preparation, and will be inserted in an early number of the "*Lantern*." In the meantime we may be allowed to call the attention of the public to the proofs of a fact stated in the Society's address, which Mr. Vevers directly contradicts. We allude to the destruction, by order of the Conference, *without reading*, of the addresses of the people after Mr. Wesley's death. Had the contradiction appeared only in the pages of that singularly *polite and candid* effusion entitled "Work for Dr. Warren," we should not have deemed it worth noticing; but when Mr. Vevers, who comes forward *in propria persona*, and, to do him justice, does not transgress those limits of candour and decorum which even controversy requires, when this gentleman flatly denies that such a circumstance ever took place, it is incumbent upon us, without loss of time, to give our authority for the statement. In the "*Methodist Monitor*," published in 1796, vol. i, page 17, a communication is inserted "from a manuscript which never before appeared in print." The author's name, it is stated, "would give considerable weight to what he has written, but the editor was not at liberty to publish it." In this paper it is stated, page 19, that at the Conference held in Manchester, in July, 1791, the preachers "imagined deliberation with the people to be perfectly unnecessary; and their *destroying the addresses they received, without perusing them*, to put the best construction we can upon their motives, was treating the people with contempt." The Rev. John Pawson published a reply to the first number of the "*Methodist Monitor*," couched in very hostile language. But does he contradict this statement? So far from that, he says, respecting the communication mentioned above, "I know the author well, and have read the manuscript some time since." In the "*Methodist Monitor*," vol. i, p. 172, is the following passage, in reference to Mr. Pawson's reply:—

"Mr. Pawson says, 'Is it not beyond measure astonishing, that he should represent the Manchester Conference as destroying all the addresses sent to them by the people, without perusing them, when he knows, as well as I do, that those addresses were only *for and against* the sacrament,' &c.—It is rather singular that this good man should positively declare, 'we knew what was in them,' when he owns they were destroyed without being perused! By what means did the Conference come at this knowledge, as they never were perused? I can assure Mr. Pawson, that addresses were destroyed which contained many things besides the sacrament. And if he and his brethren continue to deny it, I will in a future number of the *Monitor* endeavour to bring matters of fact to confirm what I now declare. I hope Mr. Pawson has not forgotten that petitions were destroyed also at the London Conference of 1792."

Our readers will remark that in the passages quoted it is stated that the addresses were "*destroyed*." Now, as we are not acquainted with any method of destroying obnoxious papers nearly so summary as by burning them, and as the Conference would, no doubt, wish to get rid of them as speedily as possible, the fair presumption is that they were destroyed by fire. However, we will not contest this knotty point. We think Mr. Vevers will hardly stand on this quibble. He may take all the advantage of it, if he please.

Now Mr. Vevers either knew of this fact or he did not. If he did not, what are we to think of his qualifications as a writer on points of Methodistical history? If he did, what shall we say of his candour and honesty as a writer? In the horns of this dilemma we leave him, to get out with credit if he can.

Our readers will perceive by the last extract, that the facts of the case have been rather under than overstated. If Mr. Vevers is so astounded at the bare mention of the burning of one set of papers, in 1791, what will he say to the repetition of the act in 1792!

## "FARMER DAWSON" AGAIN.

The editor of a certain publication has made a wonderful discovery in natural history which deserves to be put on record. The advice given to farmer Dawson, in the last number of the *Lantern*, it seems is not applicable, inasmuch as the said worthy is not in the habit of shearing sheep at Christmas or mowing hay on New Year's Day. Smitten as Mr. Dawson appears to be with the itch of controversy, we are afraid that "the time of the singing of birds will be come, and the voice of the turtle be heard in the land," long before he has leisure to attend to his own business, particularly should he get upon one of his celebrated *railroad excursions*. Since our scientific editor is such an adept at natural history, we will furnish him with a remarkable fact, which we hope will be of use to him. One is, that "men do not expect to gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles," any more than they look for conciliation from the Methodist preachers, or candour and civility from the Conference advocates. However high we may estimate Mr. Dawson's personal character for piety and usefulness, any serious answer to his trash, is utterly out of the question. In point of fact, it is unanswerable,—for the simple reason, that there is nothing in it to answer. Did we wish to convince any person of the weakness of the cause Mr. Dawson espouses, we would not wish to adopt a more effectual plan than to place his "queries" in their hands.



## WESLEYAN REFORMATION.

## CAMELFORD CIRCUIT, CORNWALL.

*At a Quarterly Meeting held at Camelford, on Monday, the 29th December, 1834, the Superintendent having refused to put the motions which had been handed to him, William Grose, Esq., of Penpont, was called to the Chair. The following Resolutions were moved by T. P. Rosevear, Esq. of Barn Park, and seconded by Mr. John Davey, of Wadebridge:—*

## RESOLVED,

1st.—That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Conference has acted prematurely in establishing the Theological Institution, the rule of Pacification adopted in 1797 requiring that “in order to prevent any degree of precipitation in making NEW RULES, and to obtain information of the sentiments of our people on every such rule, we have agreed to the article mentioned under the 7th head, by which no regulations will be finally confirmed till after a year’s consideration, and the knowledge of the sentiments of the Connexion at large, through the medium of all their public officers.”

2d.—That this meeting do respectfully, but firmly, request that the Theological Institution be forthwith abandoned, as being uncalled for by the body of the people.

3d.—That full scope be given in the regular meetings for the discussion of ALL questions which the people wish to make known to the Conference.

4th.—That the officers of the Connexion be tried by the meetings to which they respectively belong, and that no one be removed from his office except by the consent of a majority of that meeting; and that no private member be expelled but by the vote of a majority of the leaders’ meeting.

5th.—That this meeting deeply regrets that a custom too generally prevails of the preacher quitting the chair on the discussion of any subject of which he may disapprove, thereby dissolving the meeting, and depriving the further proceedings of their official character. This meeting therefore recommends that there be a lay delegate chosen for each circuit, to meet the preachers at the next Conference, in order to recast all the rules adopted since 1797, and the usages of the Connexion, into such a code of laws as may appear most suited to the present advanced state of the societies.

6th.—That this meeting resolves on withholding their contributions from all the funds, excepting such as are necessary for meeting the local demands of this circuit, until the Theological Institution be entirely laid aside, and the foregoing regulations be adopted by the Conference; unless a decided majority of the people in the Connexion express themselves to the contrary.

7th.—That these resolutions be forwarded to the President of the Conference, and be published in the *Christian Advocate*, *Cornish Guardian*, and *West Briton* newspapers; and that a subscription to defray the expense be received by the Chairman.

WILLIAM GROSE, Chairman.

It was afterwards resolved,—That the thanks of the meeting be respectfully offered to the Chairman, for his prompt and valuable assistance on this occasion.

## CARLISLE CIRCUIT.

*At the Quarterly Meeting of the Carlisle Circuit, held in Carlisle, 1st of January, 1835, the Superintendent of the Circuit in the Chair, the following proceedings took place:—*

After the usual financial affairs had been settled, a vote of thanks passed to the circuit stewards for their services during the past year, and the re-election of the steward, who had been in office twelve months, having taken place, then commenced a conflict between the preacher and the brethren present,—which shows, in a striking point of view, the unhappy tendency of some of our rules to create strife, through their ambiguous wording. About fifty brethren were present, being the greatest number ever known to be present at a quarterly meeting in this circuit,—forty of them decidedly wished and requested the Chairman to nominate as circuit steward, for the ensuing year, a brother present, who, they were pleased to consider, was every way eligible to fill the office. But, in defiance of the meeting and regardless of their entreaties, this the Chairman positively refused to do,—and proceeded forthwith to nominate a young man who was then holding the office of society steward, and who had been two years in that office;—this, of course, met with a decided negative; but not through any disrespect to the young man nominated, (for he is highly and deservedly esteemed by his brethren,) but because the Chairman was determined to force him upon the meeting. After a considerable conflict and much clamour, the brethren gave way; and, relinquishing the person first mentioned, requested the Chairman to nominate another, which he did, and, of course, the person was unanimously (or nearly so) elected.

A unanimous vote was then passed requesting the Chairman to remain a third year in the circuit; to this request he did not accede. A brother present begged leave to move the following resolutions:

1. That this meeting cannot but view with feelings of alarm and regret the present agitated state of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, and must attribute that agitation and its consequences to the unjustifiable and impolitic proceedings of the Conference, in having repeatedly violated the Constitution of Methodism, in trampling upon the rights of the people, treating with indifference their remonstrances and memorials, and in assuming an arbitrary and irresponsible power.

2. That this meeting, in taking its present position in the struggle which has commenced considers itself, in so doing, sanctioned alike by reason, necessity, and Methodism; and therefore, with the help and blessing of the Almighty, is determined to maintain it. In accordance with this declaration, this meeting recommends a perseverance in discontinuing to contribute to any funds or funds under the control of Conference until a better spirit be manifested by that body.



Before the reading of these resolutions, the Chairman was extremely anxious to know whether they regarded the business of the circuit. The brother who held them in his hand distinctly stated that whatever regarded the welfare of the body at large, belonged to that meeting, and that it was competent to consult and deliberate upon the affairs of Methodism at large; upon this he was repeatedly borne down by the chair, attempted in every possible way to be silenced, repeatedly contradicted and interrupted; and when, at last, he obtained a pause to enable him to read and put the resolutions, the moment they were read the Chairman started up in a most violent manner, protested against them, as being unconstitutional and anti-Methodistical, refused to put them, and urged the meeting to consent to a memorial to be drawn up and presented by him to Conference. A member of the meeting then proposed a memorial to the meeting; this was seconded, and freely put by the chair. It was to be drawn up by a committee consisting of the stewards, the ex-circuit steward, the preachers, and two or three more named by them. The meeting saw through its fallacy, consequently it was negatived by a large majority.

Now a scene of clamour ensued. The senior circuit steward was called upon to put the resolution, which had been moved and seconded.—which he did in a firm, decided tone, notwithstanding the opposition of the Chairman, who was loud in his language and angry in his expostulations, reflecting upon the gray hairs of the circuit steward, (a most respectable person, and ranking high in society,)—threatened to call him before a higher tribunal, and have him tried for his conduct. The resolutions were passed by about thirty-five voting for them, leaving a minority of scarcely ten, several having previously left the room. Upon this the meeting concluded in the usual way, and twenty leaders having met, passed a vote of thanks to the steward for his firmness, and pledged themselves to stand by him. And here ended a quarter-day, memorable in Carlisle for the attempt of the preacher to rule and bend the meeting to his will, and for that firm spirit of opposition manifested by the brethren in resisting such undue assumption of power.

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### TO OUR READERS.

Our opponents, the Conference party, have made use of every means; legal or illegal, to put down the present publication. The particulars of the manœuvres resorted to for this purpose we are not quite at liberty to mention; suffice it to say, that the object of the parties in question, we believe, has been to convict us of a breach of the stamp laws. They might have spared themselves the trouble. We wish neither to break nor evade any of the laws of our country or of Methodism. We wish, as to the latter, that our opponents could say the same. Since it has been found impossible to crush us by the strong arm of the law, their next attempt has been to *write* us down. If success is to attend their efforts, they must fight with different weapons from those yet introduced into the contest. We have brought forward grave and serious charges which are not to be slurred over by low buffoonery; we have stated facts which cannot be controverted by malignant scurrility. Our case is simply this: the solemn compact entered into by the preachers in 1795 and 1797 has been repeatedly, and still is violated; we therefore demand redress. The securities for the maintenance of the people's rights have been found insufficient; we therefore claim additional ones. This is the plain state in which matters stand. To the laws of Methodism, as explained according to their simple common-sense meaning; to the dictates of reason and the rules of Scripture; to an enlightened religious public we appeal. Judge ye between us. What must be thought of that cause which has no better defence to make than personal slander and coarse abuse? If we refrain from personalities, it is not that we have any lack of materials; they abound *ad nauseam*. But we leave that dirty work to those whose nature is congenial with the employment. Should we be provoked, however, we know not what we may do; we merely give a cautionary hint, which will be understood in the proper quarter, "that those who live in glass houses, should never throw stones."

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### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. Joyce's trial shall appear in our next.

We beg to thank our friend S. for pointing out the articles in the old Magazine. We shall not lose sight of them.

We have received intelligence of a most interesting and encouraging nature from a number of circuits, the insertion of which we are obliged to postpone for the present.

The acceptable communication from our Todmorden correspondent is just now (Monday afternoon) come to hand. We shall have pleasure in giving it insertion in our next.

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Orders and Communications, (post paid,) may be addressed to the Secretaries, at the Office of the Association, Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool.

The Manchester Office of the Association is over the *Times* Office, Market-street.

Subscriptions will be received by W. SMITH, Esq. (the Chairman,) Reddish-house, near Stockport; W. WOOD, Esq. Newton-street, Manchester; at the Offices of the Association, Manchester and Liverpool; and by the Officers and Committee of any Branch Association.

Agents are wanted in most of the Circuit Towns, for the sale of the "Watchman's Lantern" and the other publications of the Association. Applications, (post paid,) to be made as above.

# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 4.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28, 1835.

Price 1½d.

## WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION.

### LIVERPOOL MEETING.

On Thursday, the 22nd instant, a meeting of the members and friends of the Wesleyan Methodist Association was held in the Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool, for the purpose of receiving a report of the proceedings and state of the Association, and transacting other business connected with it. The audience was both numerous and respectable. Mr. Farrer, of Liverpool, was called to the chair, and the business of the meeting commenced by singing the 508th hymn:—

“God of love, who hearest prayer,  
Kindly for thy people care.”

Mr. Russell offered an impressive prayer, imploring the blessing of God upon the Society and upon its proceedings; after which the Chairman called upon Mr. James Picton, one of the secretaries, to read the report of the committee. Mr. Picton then read the report, of which the following is an abstract:

A rapid review was first taken of the circumstances in the Methodist Society which gave rise to the Association, and several instances particularized of breach of faith and disregard of law on the part of the Conference. Union, it was stated, had been the source of the power which had enabled the preachers to trample on the rights of the societies and to violate their own solemn engagements, and union was now to be the watch-word of the people. The progress of the Association since the 21st of November, when the first public meeting was held in Liverpool, was next stated. Public meetings had been held in three of the Manchester circuits,—in Salford, Leeds, Bolton, and in the Wrexham circuit. Arrangement were now in progress for a series of public meetings in all the principal towns. Branch Associations had been formed in the following circuits:—Manchester, (four circuits,) Salford, Liverpool, (two circuits,) Hull, Carlisle, Whitehaven, Todmorden, Rochdale, Wrexham, Northwich, Nantwich, Stourbridge, Dudley, Skipton, Blakely, Heywood, (near Manchester,) and Sheerness. Many circuits, in which popular feeling was very strong, had declined joining the Association until after the quarter day. Resolutions, demanding redress of grievances, had been passed at the following quarterly meetings:—Barnard Castle, Carlisle, Whitehaven, Northwich, Wrexham, Hull, Bridlington, Appleby, Hindes-street, (London,) Lambeth, fourth Manchester, Camelford, Dudley, Stourbridge, Bilston, and Rochdale. Letters of a most encouraging nature had been received from the following places, where no Association as yet exists:—Edinburgh, Appleby, Northampton, Truro, St. Austel, Camelford, London, Stoke-on-Trent, Lane End, Bishop Auckland, Macclesfield, Shrewsbury, Wotton-under-Edge, Halifax, Bow, Penrith, Newark, Darlington, Sunderland, Selby, and Winchester. The recent declaration, signed by forty-five trustees of the London chapels, was also noticed. A list of the official members expelled in Liverpool for joining the Association was then given, and the report concluded by stating the objects the Association had in view, and the means by which those objects were to be attained.

The secretary having concluded the report,

The CHAIRMAN rose and said—I trust that the report which we have just heard has been as satisfactory to the meeting as it has been to myself. When, two months ago,—at the first public meeting we held,—I had the honour of bringing before you a statement of the principles of the Association, I certainly expected that those principles would make their way in the country, but that they would so soon have exercised so large a measure of influence was more than my most sanguine anticipations had conceived. (Hear, hear.) On that occasion I stated that the preachers, in order to be consistent with the maxim which they had laid down, of a right divine to do what they pleased in the Church, must expel the movers of the reformation; and I now stand before you in the honourable position of one of the expelled. (Cheers.) And perhaps I am the first man who ever stood up in a public meeting, and that, too, in his native town, and stated that he considered it a high honour to have been expelled from the Methodist Society—(hear)—that is, for such a cause. For, of what have I been guilty? I have seen abuses for many years; I have seen various parts of the Methodist body borne down by priestly domination. We have seen individuals here and there turned adrift, and as far as that power could be brought to bear on them, their prospects for this life and that which is to come, blasted; (hear, hear.) and at Leeds a thousand persons were driven away, against not one of whom a single act of immorality had been alleged. (Hear.) You are all aware, I dare say, that we have, in order to convey information on the progress of the Association, and matters connected with it, instituted a small work called the *Watchman's Lantern*, which has hitherto been, and I believe will still be, conducted in a respectable manner. The other party have issued a publication of a similar description, called the *Illuminator*, and I am well pleased to see publications emanate from both sides, as it is not at all likely that men will exercise their judgment aright, and

come to a correct conclusion, by confining themselves to what merely one party may have to say. If the opposite publication, of which I speak, had kept to the proper matter for discussion, all would have been well. But they have travelled out of their way, as I think, to attack the personal characters of some persons prominent in this Association, for the avowed purpose of silencing them, and endeavouring to injure them in their temporal affairs. If that paper were only circulated in Liverpool, it would be entirely unworthy of notice; but it has been extensively sent through the Postoffice, and, no doubt, widely diffused by the booksellers in the country. The object is to show to different places that the persons connected with the Association are men of bad character, and, therefore, their statements must be looked upon with great suspicion. An individual who is particularly alluded to, and the only case I shall mention, is Mr. David Rowland. In that publication it is stated that he was many years ago expelled from the Methodist Society. That is not true. I know all the particulars of a circumstance that occurred when he was eighteen years of age. It was one solitary sin committed in haste, and as hastily repented of; but his connexion with the Society was never suspended, nor ever intended so to be. (Loud cheers.) The next circumstance alluded to is that relating to "Mr. S.," with whom it so happened that I was particularly intimate. It is said that that gentleman had suffered by his (Mr. Rowland's) tricks. The transaction alluded to is twenty years old, and that gentleman told me he did *not* suffer by Mr. Rowland's tricks,—for seven years ago, when Mr. Rowland was engaged in bringing before the quarterly meeting the case of our Leeds brethren, that gentleman spoke to me, and told me of the two circumstances in reference to Mr. Rowland. After he had finished what he had to say, I told him that what he had mentioned did not afford any substantial reason why I should cease to respect Mr. Rowland; that I had known so much of his integrity and uprightness, and of his having gone on in church affairs so steadily and consistently in the path of duty, without reference to his ease or to his interest, that what he said had no weight with me, and that I should most likely be more intimate with Mr. Rowland than ever. (Cheers.) That has been the case; and to this hour I have no occasion to repent, nor is there a man living to whom I can more heartily give the right hand of fellowship. (Hear.) I stand before this audience not in an anonymous capacity to eulogize Mr. Rowland. Be it remembered that the slander has been cast upon him by an *anonymous* writer. I should like to know if the individual be present; if so, let him stand forth (loud cheers) to contradict me, and we shall see if his testimony is as well entitled to credit in this town as mine. (Applause.) There are other things introduced into this pamphlet, but I have given you a sufficient specimen of it; and for the future (unless something of a very particular nature be introduced) I shall treat it with the contempt it deserves. (Cheers.) When they begin to write about the *matter* we have brought forward, and deal in arguments fit for the consideration of sensible men, it may be worth while to notice them. Not only in that publication, but in several others,—the *Magazine*, the *Watchman*, and in many addresses, are the originators and managers of this Association branded as men of no character, weight, station, influence, or property. (Laughter.) One would suppose the Conference to be composed of wise men; but when wise men set themselves to accomplish an object they do not put forth more strength than is needful for its accomplishment. If I want to snuff the candle I do not get a cannon and fire it, in order that the ball may strike off the wick. Yet, what has the Conference done? Why, if we had all the property, influence, weight, station, and character which they say we have *not*, they could not possibly have done more to counteract us. What is the conclusion? That there must be some weight with us; or, why all this array? You see the absurdities they deal in. (Applause.) Be it remembered that our statements, and the facts that we have adduced, every one of them remain unanswered to this hour. The doctrine preached to us is, "Sit down quietly, and do as you are bid." (Laughter.) I conceive such a doctrine to be not only un-Methodistical, but unscriptural. (Hear, hear.) Many allusions have been made to the founder of Methodism, and to a certain extent this is well; but it would be better if a more frequent reference were made to the Founder of Christianity. (Cheers.) Alluding to the "lordships," &c., he says, "It shall not be so among you, for ye are all brethren; and he that would be greatest among you, let him be your servant." Do the members of the Association hold any opinions more radical than this? (Cheers.) I trow not. "To the law and to the testimony." This is a greater authority than either John Wesley or the Methodist Conference. The Conference has assumed the right of governing, without question, the whole of the Methodist Societies. (Hear.) What is the meaning and the use of government? If I understand it aright, it is some authority which shall provide for the welfare of the whole community, and endeavour to unite its various parts as closely as possible in one harmonious whole; yet, we see but little of this description of government. The Conference says,—you must either do as we say, or go about your business. This is the sum and substance of the Constitution of Methodism, as at this moment in existence. (Applause.) I defy any man living to make more or less of it. The next point to which I would advert is this: The declaration which we made at the outset was—that this Association required nothing new in Methodism. A great deal has been said and written upon this subject. It is said that we do. I still say that substantially we do not. The true and proper construction to be put, and which was put upon the constitution of 1797, was that which I will just read you, from a pamphlet published by one of the preachers who signed the constitution of 1797, and afterwards repented. Seven years after having signed that constitution he wrote this book, and he says,—“The Conference, for the sake of peace, conceded to the clamorous faction who called themselves the people, one degree of authority after another, till they put it out of their own power to dismiss a leader from his office without the sanction of a leaders’ meeting, or take a preacher, however qualified, into the Connexion, if a majority at a quarterly meeting should express its disapprobation. The leaders and stewards being constituted judges of themselves and the people, the transition was easy to their determining that no preacher should be continued a second year if they resolved on his removal. This last degree of authority they assumed, for it was never conceded. But this does not prevent their exercising it without control, nor is there any appeal from their decision.”

This was the construction put upon the constitution of 1797 by one of the men who signed it, but who afterwards became its enemy. It is therefore a good testimony, and not to be invalidated. ("Name the author.") M'Donald, I believe. This same person, speaking in reference to reformation, says,—“Necessity alone is a sufficient reason for separating from a religious community.” I perfectly agree with him; and until I see some stronger necessity than at present exists, I do not mean to remove myself any further from the Methodist community than I am at present. “At the Reformation (he continues) a separation from the Church of Rome was necessary on several accounts, but more especially because that church would not tolerate the reformers within its pale. Had they been permitted to preach the gospel in its purity, and worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, the most holy, sober, and judicious among them would not have scrupled at living and dying in the Romish communion. How much better would it have been to have spread the savour of divine knowledge throughout the whole of the western church, than by separating from it to have the work of reformation confined to narrow limits? But such was the intolerant spirit of that church, that reformers, instead of being countenanced in it, had every reason to expect the severest persecution.” So that you see this man was strongly opposed to division, and so am I. (Mr. Russell, “And so am I.”) The next impor-

tant point in the constitution of 1797 was, that the management of the funds was understood to be taken out of the hands of the Conference, and placed under the management of laymen.—But this concession has not been adhered to; and my opinion is, that until this principle is carried out to its fullest extent, and the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Connexion completely divided, no lasting peace is to be expected in the Methodist Society. (Hear, hear.) These two things which I have stated embrace nothing new; they are only the following up of the principles of the constitution of 1797. It has been said that the Association wishes to introduce the ballot into Conference. This is a mistake. The proposition concerning that was contained in a resolution published by the Manchester First Circuit, and was never adopted by the Association. (Hear.) Individually, I have a most thorough contempt for the ballot. I am perfectly aware that a strong feeling is abroad upon the subject; but though the ballot may be expedient in political affairs, I conceive it is not scriptural in its application to affairs connected with the church. The principle of Christianity is light, and any thing that savours of darkness savours not of Christ. (Cheers.)

The next point is of much importance. If it is not justifiable to proceed to these lengths now, it never will be. I stated, a short time ago, a general principle in reference to government. If we are to have a government, it is to be supposed that it should at all events listen to what we have to say in reference to our state and condition. I govern my family, or at least I try to do so, but I apprehend I should govern it very inefficiently if I did not hear what the members of it have to say to me. I do not see how I could correctly govern it if I did not. But what says the Conference? It will not only not hear your grievances, but it will not let you talk about them. (Hear, and a laugh.) This involves so great an absurdity, that I wonder how any persons in this enlightened age could attempt to force it upon a community of British men. (Cheers.) It is so astonishing that I can scarcely believe it true; yet so it is, as the President's gagging letter fully proves. (Applause.) Methodism is a voluntary association, from which any man can withhold his contribution, and break no law: it is voluntary on both sides. The preachers, that is, the Conference, can subject the people to as many contributions as they please, for any thing and every thing; and I wonder where is the rule why I may not only suspend my own contribution, but tell other people why I do so. (Applause.) But they say,—"Terrible consequences will ensue; you wish to starve widows and orphans," &c. That these consequences were ever contemplated, I do not believe. But supposing they had been; before the other party attempted the dangerous task of overturning a people's liberties, and trampling on the rights of men, they ought well to have considered the consequences. (Loud applause.) And even now, if they are prepared to meet us in a fair and amicable spirit, and to appoint deputies to adjust the constitution, we shall be happy to join them, and not only contribute, as formerly, to the various funds, but even more abundantly. (Loud cheers.) I think I have said sufficient respecting the principles of the Association. I may now be allowed to say a few words as to its future proceedings. We see not the least disposition in the Conference to meet us in a friendly spirit for the settling of matters of government and arranging the future conduct of each party. Nothing, therefore, remains but to carry out vigorously and effectually the principles of the Association. The plan is to print every fact and argument bearing upon the question, and to send agents from one end of the land to the other to spread this knowledge. What is the reason why we in Liverpool stand in the foremost rank? Because seven years ago we read the Methodist constitution. Because we saw the liberties of the Connexion trampled under foot at Leeds; and because we have since been watching, with keen and anxious eyes, the proceedings of the men whose conduct we now denounce. If the rest of the members had read the pamphlets of the London South Circuit, they would have been in the same position, and prepared to maintain their rights. The result is, that we are now standing forward in the cause of Methodist reform, and we conclude that by similar means the people in many other places will be similarly operated upon; and if so, success must attend our efforts. (Cheers.) The energies of the Association will therefore be directed to the spread of knowledge upon the subjects now in dispute throughout the whole Connexion; and for the information of both friends and opponents I may state, that the means for effecting this object are not wanting. (Loud applause.)

Mr. POOLEY next came forward and spoke as follows:—Mr. Chairman and brethren, yes, brethren still! (hear, hear, and cheers,) for if I could not call you by that title, I should not have the courage to stand where I now do. But I know I am among those who love me, and who are loved by me in return ("yes, yes;") from whom, notwithstanding the attempts which have been made, I cannot in affection be separated. (Cheers.)

Sir, though this in one sense is a gloomy occasion, yet I have been happy to see some smiles here to-night, and really a smile does one good in these times. (A laugh.) My being here reminds me strongly of a practice which we are accustomed to adopt in Sunday school processions. To keep up a respectable appearance we often place a little one between two big ones, thus our Chairman has preceded me, and I believe the Rev. Mr. Gordon is to follow.

The existence of the Methodist Association is a standing memorial of the affection of the Methodist people towards their preachers. Individuals have been cut off and trampled upon, but who has cared? It has indeed affected their own families, and been felt perhaps at their leader's meetings; but like a very little pebble dropped into the smooth water, the circles it has produced have been of very small circumference, never reaching to the margin of the lake. A thousand members were cut off at Leeds, but the ripples did not reach the boundaries of the Connexion—they only affected the waters to a limited extent. The public mind still remained in its usual morbidly placid state. Some tried to excite it into motion, but it could not be done. *But touch a preacher!* as the Conference by its district meeting touched Dr. Warren, and what is the consequence? Why, it is as if an earthquake had shook the Connexion from the centre to the circumference.—as if the people with one heart and voice had exclaimed,—"It shall not be so in our Israel." Am I not justified in inferring from this single circumstance, accidental as it appeared, though I doubt not providential in reality, that the people love their preachers, and will not see them trampled on with impunity while they act an independent part. ("Yes, yes.") That they will rally round them and form a shield of defence! That they will not suffer them to be borne down by any power whatever. (Cheers.)

It is a singular fact attending this controversy, and one which must forcibly strike every disinterested individual, every calm observer, that each party is accusing the other of an attempt to revolutionize Methodism—of an attempt to subvert its constitution, and to introduce principles which it did not recognise before. It may do good, and not be foreign to the object of our meeting a little to look at this. The Conference, the one party, has been long insidiously attacking our constitution; but we did not perceive it till the occurrence of the great outrage at Leeds. I love to advert to that period, to put the Conference perpetually in mind of it. That was the moment which terminated the liberties of Methodism. At Leeds our eyes were opened,—what to see? Not the enemy at our gates; not our opponents approaching us; but our defences broken up, and the enemy within the very heart of our citadel.

The Conference now in 1835, when they speak of preserving the "rights" of the preachers, and—mark the difference—the "privileges" of the people, speak with limitations, with mental reservations. They speak of the constitution of 1797, as explained at Leeds in 1827. and confirmed



by the *Minutes of Conference of 1828*: that is, according to the peculiar and most felicitous phraseology of the perpetual head of the Connexion, with certain "amplificatory explanations," (a laugh) which we conceive to involve material and even vital alterations. I allude to several points: first, the new power claimed to be vested in district meetings. I have here the *Minutes of the celebrated meeting* which assumed this power; and really it opened its sittings with a declaration which showed an inward suspicion that they felt the power they were about to exercise was legally unconstitutional, and would be objected to by the people at large. Hear part of their first resolution: "We consider ourselves"—mind, if they had been understood to possess the power before, there would have been no occasion for this—"They consider themselves to be invested with full powers to decide and act as to them may seem right and necessary," &c. Here then is the announcement of the power which they conceived themselves to be in possession of. What is it all founded upon, brethren? Let us look—on part of the *Minutes of Conference of 1797*, never agreed to by the people. A plan of pacification having been agreed on two years before, delegates met the Conference at Leeds, and entered into a solemn compact with the latter, by which its powers were limited; the jurisdiction of local meetings defined; and the liberties of the Connexion established on (as we fondly imagined) a firm basis. But when those honest fellows, the delegates, had gone home, Conference came to another string of resolutions, called "Miscellaneous Regulations." First, with respect to districts they say—"The President shall have a right, if invited, to visit any circuit, inquire into their affairs, and redress any grievance." Now the "amplificatory explanation" which our governors put upon it is this in effect—"The President may do all things whatsoever he will" that is in union with the district committee, and is responsible to none but the Conference for what he does. (Hear.) But if this be the real meaning of these miscellaneous regulations, how ludicrously inconsistent is it with what was enacted a short time before, namely, that no preacher shall be suspended except he have a trial, not merely before the district committee, but also before the leaders, trustees, and stewards of the circuit in which he labours! We hear sometimes of the glorious uncertainty of the law—no wonder that there is uncertainty in Methodist law, when things are decreed on one page and reversed on the next. (Cheers.)

Another of the "explanatory amplifications" which Conference agents have adopted consists of the resurrection of the dead law of 1796 and its incorporation with the living ones of 1797:—but mark the inconsistency of the proceedings at Leeds as compared with those at Liverpool! At Leeds, the Special District Meeting never recognised the law of 1796, or else they would have acted upon it, for it would have been a far easier way of getting rid of troublesome and obnoxious men than by putting them out of society by the expensive apparatus of a special district. This rule, if admitted as valid, is admirably adapted to stifle all complaints on the part of local officers and members of society, to consolidate the power of Conference, and to prevent all reform. I can compare it to nothing but a gag,—which a man having a mind to destroy me puts into my mouth, in order that he may effect his purpose without my cries being heard. (Applause.)

What is this law? We have heard so much of it in Liverpool lately that it is hardly necessary to advert to it,—but here it is: "Let no man, or number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new till it has first been appointed by the Conference." There is a precious piece of legislation for Britons. I think it needs no further comment than this: that the man who submits to it is not worthy to possess religious liberty. (Loud applause.) He deserves to be trodden upon by every ecclesiastical despot who chooses to put his foot upon his neck. (Much applause.) Such a man would be more fit for the latitude of Portugal or Rome than for this free and happy land. (Cheers.) When I hear complaints against our venerable Church Establishment, and see her tolerant conduct, her reluctance to act in any way harshly to those who differ from her, and when I fancy our President installed on the throne of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the conclave of Conference acting under his authority, and ask myself, what the Conference would do when exalted to that dignity, especially if backed by the secular power of the State, and invested with ability to imprison and torture whom they would, as Churchmen formerly did, for the expression of independent opinions affecting the Church, I tremble to reflect what would be the consequences: of one thing I am confident,—we should have had no meeting here to-night. (Hear, hear.) But let me pass on.—The second "amplificatory explanation" is upon the law by which I and my brethren in Liverpool have been unrighteously expelled from the Society. (Hear.) I will read the law, and then the "amplificatory explanation." I cannot now refer to the *Minutes*; but I recollect the law sufficiently well to recite it. It is this,—"No leader or society steward shall be appointed to his office, or be removed therefrom, but in conjunction with the leaders' meeting, &c." Now, what think you is the "amplificatory explanation?" It is the following:—(you will not discover it any where in a printed form, but it is sufficiently obvious in practice.)—"Nevertheless, if the superintendent think proper, he may try any leader for any alleged offence, as a private member, and so deprive him of all benefit of that law." Don't you think this "explanation" very like a reversal? (Laughter.) Is it not very like giving a thing with one hand and taking it away with the other? (Cheers.) The way to meet it is the following:—Does exclusion from membership involve exclusion from office? If it does, then you cannot remove a leader from membership by it, because the rule says, not without the "conjunction of the meeting" to which he belongs: but if a man may be excluded from society, and retain his office as a leader, then they may go to work as they please according to their "amplificatory explanations." (Applause.) This proposition is so self-evident that you cannot legally expel a leader but by the law which I have recited, that you are ready to exclaim,—"Why, you cannot possibly be expelled otherwise!" I recollect an anecdote very applicable to this part of the case, and, as I before remarked, that I like to see a smile even in these awful times, I will relate it:—One day a man saw one of his friends in the stocks: "Ah," said he, "how has this happened?" His friend told him his offence. "Oh," replied he, "you cannot be put in the stocks for that." "Why, my dear fellow," said his friend, "you may say they cannot put me in, but don't you see that *I am in*?" (Much laughter.) You may tell us that by this new interpretation of the law we cannot be expelled, but, brethren, do you not see that *we are expelled*?" (Loud cheers.) Where then is the law? Gone to the four winds of heaven, and so may any other law as soon as any superintendent says "*Presto*." (Laughter and cheers.)—If we allow this, and adopt these "amplificatory explanations," why then we are the guilty parties. (Hear, hear.) The question is settled at once. The Conference has a right to say, we have caused all this agitation: the Methodist Association is attempting to revolutionize our system, to subvert our constitution, and have introduced anarchy and confusion into the Connexion. But, on the contrary, if the law is to be received in its honest, common sense, and just interpretation, then have we a right to say to the Conference, You are the guilty parties—you have dishonestly and Jesuitically deprived us of the liberties which our forefathers obtained through so much struggling and pain of mind—you are the aggressors, and on you we charge the guilt: disprove it if you can! (Loud applause.) So much, brethren, for law. Let us see the effect of the system pursued by the Conference. We see the first effect in the prostration of our local meetings. There is no independence. The preachers exercise an undue influence: the rich men among us, whether *pious* or not, uphold them in all they do. (Hear, hear.) The



good man, the pious, laborious, useful man, if he be but poor, and, above all, if he be but independent, and refuses to submit to the domination, is put down. The extinguisher is put upon him. (A laugh.) His light is never seen—his influence is never felt. The Conference has followed the counsel of the rich in most places—everywhere where they could. Oh what a specimen of the operation of this system is there in our own town! Look at Brunswick Chapel: it is a splendid edifice, though not half so much so as it might have been from the vast sum it cost. But it was built to gratify the rich men. The liturgy was introduced in all its pomp: an organ was got up to gratify the ear and to please the taste, and what was the consequence? How long was it before we were obliged to raise £4000 for the purpose, not of liquidating the debt, but of paying off a very small portion of the debt, only sufficient to bring it into such a condition that the chapel, when fully occupied and rented, should just keep its head above water. (Hear.) Stanhope-street chapel I do not know the exact state of, nor probably does any body else, except one man; (a laugh;) but I believe it is in much the same condition. ("Worse, worse.") Now look at another chapel, built on a different plan, got up from different counsels,—look at Mount pleasant chapel. It is a plain edifice, suited to Methodist hearers, fitted to accommodate the poor as well as the rich,—and what is presented to you? why, the fact that that chapel only cost about £2000, and yet has actually paid £500 towards paying off the debt upon the Temple at the top of London-road. But what did they do in Mount-pleasant chapel to enable them the better to do this? They infringed on the sittings of the poor. ("Shame, shame.") At any rate, we have something to do with that. Our friends, our good, kind, warm-hearted friends in the Conference tell us not to give ourselves the unnecessary trouble of interfering with the Society's grievances of Manchester and Leeds,—with nothing, in short, but the matters connected with our own individual circuit. I will read some of the Conference Minutes on the subject:—

"We cheerfully acknowledge the general right of our highly valued brethren, the class leaders, &c., freely and fully to express their views and wishes to the Conference, by way of memorial or otherwise, on subjects which materially and manifestly involve the spiritual interests of the classes placed under their care, or the religious prosperity of the society to which they are severally attached."

And even this merely general right is to be exercised under most rigid restrictions;—thus, "on such occasions only as seem to justify an extraordinary interference; with a cautious avoidance of those subjects of memorial which do not immediately and directly affect that particular portion of our Society to which the leaders concerned in such interference are individually attached." And more of the same sort. This cuts the whole connexion at once into small bodies of men so as to be easy of management by those who are set over them. I should like, by way of consistency, to see the same principle applied to the general Chapel Fund, the Yearly, the July, and the Missionary Collections. At these collections we are constantly told that we are a universal family. The poor circuits want you to help them; but then they will let us have nothing to do with any of the circuits but just to help them to pay their debts. (Cheers.) But, brethren, we are a Connexion not only for financial purposes; we are not a series of isolated, independent masses of men—we are connected by a bond of amity and affection; when the hand is affected the foot shall feel it; and when the head is sick the whole heart is faint; we feel when our brethren are deprived of the pastoral ministrations of our preachers, as well as when they are under pecuniary embarrassments;—when they are oppressed by the iron arm of power as well as when they bow under the weight of poverty and affliction. (Loud cheers.) And we desire not only to feel, but to say—"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." Another way which our local meetings are kept under subjection, is by the very facile means of communication established for other purposes, by which the superintendent, as generalissimo, can convey his orders to the heads of the district, as his lieutenants, and thence to the other subordinate officers; the whole thus organized, and thus communicating with the head at once forms a power so compact that it is scarcely possible to contend with it. I will show how it is applied to serve the purposes of the Conference:—During the first movements of the present agitation, the President of the Conference, Mr. Taylor, said, "you ought not to have taken such and such steps,—you ought to have waited until the quarterly meeting, and then spoken of your grievances,"—or something to that effect. Look now at the wiles of Jesuitism. This very man sends his mandate to every superintendent, and tells them,—“Do not suffer the question to be agitated in your quarterly meetings.” (Hear, hear.) I really feel that I am trespassing. ("No, no.") Yet I cannot help adverting to the way in which individuals, as well as public meetings, are borne down by the power against which we are contending. At our last meeting I stood in a different position, and, therefore, repressed what I am about to communicate. I know I am now treading on tender ground, but I will not hesitate, (because I know that one fact is worth a thousand arguments,) to bring before you a powerful fact, falling under my own observation, relative to one of our respected and ever-beloved local preachers. (Hear, hear.) A man who, last September but one, departed this life. I will mention his name, and when I do, I know the whole meeting will feel the truth of what I assert. His name was Webster Morgan,—than whom there never was a more amiable, a more Christian, a more devoted servant of God (Mr. Russell.—“Never!”) None ever fell under my observation whom I could more heartily and more implicitly follow, as he followed Christ. This good man died; a few days afterwards I waited on my reverend excommunicator, Mr. Jackson, with a very limited account of Mr. Morgan, which his widow wished to be inserted in the Magazine. I will read it that you may see there was nothing in it impeaching any man or any body of men:—

"Died, at Edge-hill, September 27, 1833, aged 51, Mr. Webster Morgan, for many years a faithful and affectionate class-leader, and a useful and acceptable local preacher. His upright and consistent walk through life, his well-tempered zeal for God, and his continual efforts in the cause of suffering humanity, have endeared his memory to numbers. He was taken from this mortal state by an attack of cholera of only twenty-four hours duration. The severity of the complaint prevented much conversation; but one expression is preserved by his daughter, whose sobs became audible to him, while watching at his bedside, to whom he turned and said, with great emphasis,—“God is my salvation!—Emma, I shall live again!”

This was all I wished inserted. Mr. Jackson requested me to call again, as he had not known much of Mr. Morgan and wanted to make some inquiries. I called again; he said,—“Your statement is correct with regard to Mr. Morgan's exemplary character, but he opposed us in the Leeds business.” (“Shame, shame.”) I replied, “He did, but did he not manifest his opposition in a very manly, upright, gentle way? and was it not characterized by every thing that should mark such an opposition?—not factious, violent, or abusive? He was there as he was at the head of his class, or in his pulpit, and discovered in it no more passion than a child. And is the circumstance of his opposition of the Leeds transaction to weigh against a whole life of usefulness,—exclude even a notice of his death? He said, “I am very sorry, but I cannot send it.” (“Shame, shame.”) Is not this a proof that to be independent in Methodism is to be hated? Again, they say, you may think as you please. True; but then you must keep your thoughts to yourselves. We say Yes, but we will not only think, but speak our thoughts. (Cheers.) There are three parties in our Connexion, two of whom I respect:—the first are our friends who are with us in heart, in affection, and in effort; and the second our honest enemies,—I beg to retract the word,—our honest opponents, who show themselves and tell us candidly and heartily why they oppose us. But there is another class,—I do not know how to find words to designate them; they have been

called "Neutrals." For a man to remain neutral in a time like this shows him to be either weak in intellect or (not "poor in spirit," but) poor spirited indeed. (Cheers.) One of these neutrals said in the hearing of one of my friends, "I have retired from the Association, and I would persuade you to do the same: they (the Association) will get what they want, and we shall have the benefit, without the trouble of procuring it." (Hear, hear.) "I would thou wert either cold or hot!" one of these sides is the cause of God: and remember what Deborah, the prophetess, said respecting Dan and the tribes that remained with him when the enemies were ravaging the land: remember especially what she said respecting one city. "Curse ye, Meroz, saith the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!" These are times when men should exhibit decision of character and conduct; but let your decision be marked by temperance as well as firmness. Let us not give way to passion; that never convinced an adversary yet; let us not indulge in low personalities, such as those with which we are assailed; let us advance sound arguments and facts illustrating our side of the question, and God will support the right. (Applause.) With these observations I would sit down, only that our secretary omitted to give you the names of the leaders expelled, together with the place where, and time when, they meet their classes. About forty classes in Liverpool only are thus totally cut off from the Connexion. The number of members I cannot tell, but it is very considerable. The list is not complete, only containing whatever names we could collect together at a very short notice.

[Here followed the names, &c.]

At this stage of the proceedings the Chairman proposed, that, as a relief to the meeting, a verse of a hymn should be sung. This was accordingly done, after which

The Rev. JOHN GORDON, of Dudley, was introduced to the meeting and spoke as follows:—Mr. Chairman and Friends,—It is a task of no inconsiderable difficulty to speak upon an occasion like the present; not because there is so little to say, but because there is so much. (Hear.) Because the range of facts and truths presenting themselves to the mind of a man who looks at the struggle existing throughout Methodism, is so wide as to bewilder him in his choice of the points most proper to be brought forward in a discussion of this kind. The circumstances I have just mentioned will dictate to me the line of conduct which I shall pursue, on this occasion, not by any means to deliver a set speech, for that is not at all necessary. I shall content myself with simply stating to you certain truths, which I consider worthy of the notice of every individual who is interested in the success of Methodism. The grand evil to be reprobated in the case of the Conference is the unjust, unscriptural, and injurious power which it possesses and exercises. (Hear, hear.) Power, as you well know, has been the source of, perhaps, the greatest number of evils that this sad world has been afflicted with. It is unnecessary for me to enter into an examination of the reasons why we should dread the possession of arbitrary and unlimited power on the part of any individuals with whom we may have connexion. It is only requisite to describe that power in order to see its evil, and the dangers to which its exercise necessarily exposes you. I need not reason upon it: the description will make the evils connected with it palpable to the understanding and feelings of every man. It is the doctrine of the Methodist preachers that the Conference is the ruling power of the body. Now here I never found any description of what they mean by the ruling power. The rule is exercised over both preachers and people: the Conference is composed of preachers alone. Individuals placed under any government, whether civil or ecclesiastical, should, as a matter of natural right, have a share in that government. The Conference is composed solely of ministers, and is, therefore, unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body. (Applause.) Again, there are some effects which, taken in conjunction with this general principle, will especially commend themselves to the consideration of every reflecting mind. A body of preachers should not possess the ruling power in a connexion like that of Methodism. Thus, for instance, the preachers possess the only interest capable of being abused. They have the interest of honour, and they have the interest which the money gives them. (Hear, hear.) All the honour is confided to them,—all the money, directly or indirectly, comes into their pockets. (Laughter and cheers.) These are interests capable of being abused,—most capable. The people possess nothing but spiritual interests, which cannot be abused. This fact is sufficient to prove to every considering mind that the Conference should not be the ruling authority in the body. (Hear.) Another fact is this, that the priesthood always have, invariably have, abused the power committed to their trust. (Loud applause.) If history teaches one thing more plainly than another, it is this. Let any one read that beautiful book, which the Conference does not like, forsooth, which it has reprobated in the *Methodist Magazine*, the History of Priestcraft, and see if it has not been the case of all priesthoods, Christian or Heathen, Popish or Protestant, that wherever they have obtained absolute and irresponsible power they have abused it. (Loud cheers.) Besides this general principle, that governments should be so exercised that all the governed should have a share in it, these two facts demonstrate, that of all parties, the Conference, composed as it now is, ought not to have the ruling authority in our body. (Cheers.)

Now for a brief description of the kind of power assumed and exercised by the Conference. It is universal as to the objects which it endeavours to promote. (Hear.) When I became a Methodist preacher I thought I connected myself with a religious body. I became a minister of the Gospel for the sole purpose of promoting religious objects, and I considered the Conference had the same views—the same intentions. It was for this reason, because I looked upon the Church of England rather as a political establishment than a religious body, that I turned away from its ministry, and became a Wesleyan. Now I say the Conference has not confined itself to religious objects. (Hear, hear, hear.) That it has endeavoured to promote political objects: and if I prove this, I prove that the power which it assumes is power universal as to the objects which its designs to promote. If any one will

look at the Minutes of the last Conference, which I need not read, unless it be required, ("Read, read,") will find proof of what I assert. In those Minutes two things are declared: 1st, That certain political opinions are anti-Wesleyan. 2d, That the continuance of a man in the ministry depends upon his holding or not holding, declaring or not declaring, certain political opinions. In proof of this we have the following statement:—

"That the above-mentioned speeches of Brother Stephens, (the avowed object of which is the separation of Church and State,) are directly at variance with the general sentiments of Mr Wesley and the Conference, and are distinguished by a spirit highly unbecoming a Wesleyan minister, and inconsistent with those sentiments of respect and affection towards the Church of England which our Connexion has, from the beginning, openly professed and honourably maintained. That, as far as his influence extends, Brother Stephens has committed the character of the Connexion on a question involving its public credit as well as its internal tranquillity."

Here it is plainly declared that a political question—a question upon which I do not wish to say a word, one way or the other—involves the public credit of the Connexion. Further on it is declared, that unless Mr. Stephens abstain from conduct similar in spirit and character to that which he practised before, his connexion with the Conference will be unavoidably terminated. I say, by these acts the Conference has constituted itself a political union. It has adopted certain opinions, which it has declared to be Wesleyan, and proclaimed that the objects which it designs to promote are political as well as religious. (Hear, hear.) This is opposed to its constitution—to the plain and express declaration which John Wesley himself has made on the subject of that constitution. 'This affects you.' I would say little or nothing about it if I did not believe these opinions were meant to bear upon you as well as upon the preachers. The language which I have read, say they, expresses the sentiments of the Connexion. A rule, as contained in the Minutes of Conference, is equally binding both on preachers and people. In this very book, the Minutes of Conference for 1834, the sentiments of Mr. Jackson on the subject of the separation of Church and State,—the sentiments advocated in the *Magazine*,—are declared to be the great principles which the Connexion supports. Hear the sentiments in the *Magazine*:—"It is declared by Mr. Jackson that the continuance of the union between Church and State is an object not only approved of, but actually advised by the Methodist body." Here you are committed by the exercise of the power which the Conference assumes, to the support of certain political opinions—the connexion between Church and State. What have they done within this month or two? Established a newspaper advocating those opinions—a Tory newspaper. They have published on the cover of the *Magazine* an address to Christian electors, exhorting all Christian electors to pledge their candidates to the support of the present connexion between Church and State. I say this is doing you a personal injury. I hold different opinions. My opinions are, by such acts as these, misrepresented. The Conference declares that I, as a Wesleyan, ought to hold opinions which I do not hold, nor will hold. (Applause.) It does you a public injury; it gives these representations of your opinions to the world; and, as far as those representations can influence the Government, it makes use of your names to influence that Government in a way contrary to your inclinations. Is not this downright disgraceful to the Conference? (Cheers, and exclamations of "Yes, yes.") I do not wish to offend any individual; but the view which I have of Toryism is, that it is a system which oppresses the working classes of this country. (A person in the body of the room: "It's false!") Cries of "Turn him out!" and some confusion.) I said that there were individuals who might hold different opinions; and if there are any who hold the same as I do, the observations I am about to make will be very useful, though, perhaps, not to the individual who holds others. I wish to offend no prejudices whatever. (Cheers.) I say my idea of Toryism is, that it oppresses the working classes. (Cheers, and a repetition of the cry, "It is a falsehood!") accompanied by renewed exclamations of "Turn him out!" which were discouraged by the gentlemen on the platform.) It is by the working classes that the Conference is supported; and it is to me most abominable, entertaining the ideas which I do, that the Conference should establish a newspaper, and publish addresses to Christian electors, advocating that system which directly presses down and degrades the very class by whom they are chiefly supported. (Loud applause.) It does an injury to you as a religious society also. It brings political strife and agitation—than which nothing is more unfavourable and mischievous to the growth of piety—into your religious meetings. If I am rightly informed there was no agitation in Ashton-under-Line till the District Meeting took up this question, and began to squabble about politics. Conference itself was detained day after day at its last sitting wrangling about politics, and deciding whether this or the other political opinion was consistent with Methodism. I say this fact illustrates the position, that there is no limit to the principles which the Conference may endeavour to promote. (Cheers.) It applies its power to the advancement of a political purpose; in the same way it might apply it to the advancement of any purpose under heaven: therefore it is universal as to its objects. (Applause.) I remark again that the power possessed and exercised by the Conference is unlimited as to the range of its operation,—I mean it interferes with all operations connected with Methodism. (Hear, hear.) It not only stands by itself as the ruling power, but it takes to itself *all* power. There is no power throughout the whole range of the Connexion on which it does not lay its hand and call its own. I would just observe, that it is the doctrine of Methodism that a single individual is the representative of the Conference. I believe such a doctrine was never held by any society, Christian or not Christian, before. As an individual, he is the representative



of nothing: in his teaching, pastorization, &c., he is the representative of Christ,—the under shepherd of the great Shepherd. But this is the doctrine of Methodism, and in the circuit a single individual possesses, in his individual person, all the power and authority which the Conference, when collected together, possesses.

As to that power being unlimited; in the first place, it makes all laws, there being no law throughout the whole Connexion which does not emanate from the Conference, and it is clear, from what I have said, that all these laws are binding on preachers and people. It can also interfere with all the proceedings of local meetings. If a member were to be admitted into Society, it would be supposed that, according to Methodist law, the leaders' meeting were to admit him; if he were to be expelled, in like manner, that the leaders' meeting was to expel him. Not so. The preacher is to admit him. If the meeting afterwards finds any objection, it may be stated. And so he must be turned out, if the crime be proved to the satisfaction of the preacher; and if he is to be expelled, the preacher must do it. (Hear, hear.) This is a specimen of their power in connexion with our local meetings; it takes the power out of their hands; it does not permit them either to admit or to expel. The preacher—the representative—does all these acts. The Conference can act without, and in violation of the law. (Hear, hear.) The individuals sent into the circuits in their individual capacity are law makers. Mr. Farrer knows this to his cost. A law was passed in 1796, and there was a dispute as to whether it ought to be brought forward. Who decided this,—the leaders' meeting? Oh dear, no; the preacher. Then there was a dispute as to whether Mr. Farrer's case came within the law. Who decided the question of applicability,—the meeting? Oh, no; the preacher. It was said that calling a meeting and signing letters was a bad thing; but whether a man was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered for it, there must be somebody to decide. Who did so,—the leaders' meeting? Oh, no; the preacher. Thus they not only make laws in the Conference, but come down to the people to interpret them: they decide the case, and then they determine what punishment shall be awarded to the crime of a man whose criminality they themselves have found. (Hear, hear.) Such a stretch of power surely never existed before. Another fact is, that when power is exercised by a leaders' meeting, or any other meeting, the Conference can overrule its exercise. For instance, by means of the superintendent it can say whether the question can be put to the meeting or not. By going out of the chair, the superintendent can dissolve the meeting. This is overruling the power which the Conference professes to give. Again, it overrules it by its district meetings. You have been enlightened on this subject before. Certain miscellaneous regulations were passed in 1797 respecting those meetings, referring to the preachers, and the preachers only. But in 1828 there comes out that precious document, the Minutes of Conference; and tells us that from thenceforth the Conference is to be appealed to. Appealed to! The power which is thereby given to the district meetings is just this; for the Conference, whenever they choose to come into a circuit and take the matter in dispute, if there be any, into their own hands,—to find which parties guilty they may think so,—to exclude whichever party they may think proper from having any right to judge the members of that meeting, and thus to overrule the decision of any meeting whatever. Their power overrules all district meetings, by the right of being appealed to, which Conference claimed in its Minutes of 1828. It is stated that all things relating to the classes may be brought before the Conference by the leaders. That when the leaders have expressed their opinion, it shall not be binding on the Conference, but Conference is to decide itself. What does this mean? That whatever the majority of the leaders' meeting may have decreed, the minority may appeal to the Conference, and have it reversed in their favour. (Hear.) Not only does the power exist, but it was acted upon in the case of Leeds. It is a power which makes the law—which interferes with the local meetings; power which, after the law has been made, interprets it; power which, when appealed to, executes it; power which, when all these means have failed, overrules the decision of the local meeting by the superintendent, and the district meeting by the appeal. It is a most abominable power. (Cheers.) It is a power which people with any thing like common sense or liberal feeling in their breasts ought not to suffer to exist in connexion with them a single day. (Loud applause.) How unreasonable! A leaders' meeting is constituted to conduct all the business of the society to which it appertains. Surely, to be leaders at all, they ought to be competent to do this. How can strife and contention be avoided when there is such a law which incites the minority to rebel against the majority! Oh, how contrary to the word of Almighty God! What a violation of that declaration of our Saviour, "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren!" How contrary to the New Testament on this subject, which assures us, in plain and intelligible language, that what concerned the church was decided by the church! (Cheers.) One other thing is to be observed of this power, the source of all the evil: that is to say, it is altogether irresponsible, absolute, and arbitrary. Nothing interferes with it, and no check whatever is placed upon it. This would follow from some of the observations which I have already made.

I would remark on the exercise of this power, that the Conference, in their Conferential capacity, never consult with the people. If there is any rule to be made, or any plan to be adopted, they make the rule and adopt the plan altogether independently of the people. This, I say, is directly contrary to the constitution, not to any particular law, but to the principles upon which Methodism is founded. We are a Connexion; and if we are a Connexion, nothing which affects the whole Connexion should be adopted in the Conference till it has received the sanction of the people. (Hear, hear.) A rule, at first sight, seems to

give them power; but looking into it, it recognises no such power at all. It seems to say that rules and plans adopted by the Conference should not be enforced till approved of by the society. But looking at the wording it does not say any such thing. It says that those rules and plans should be submitted to the meetings for them to say whether they will have them or not; but not that when the majority throughout the Connexion shall disapprove of them, they are to be abandoned. By a kind of playing at bo-peep, the Conference shall have the power one year afterwards of deciding, and its decision shall be binding on the people. (Hear.) This is arbitrary, irresponsible power, to the utmost extent of the word. What check have you found upon these plans and rules? The only check the preachers can talk of is this, that you can appeal. Where? From the preacher who oppresses you in the circuit to the preachers who oppress you in the district; from those who oppress you in the district to those who oppress you in the Conference. (Laughter.) See how the Conference deals with you. They tell you the Conference is the grand court of appeal for this very struggle: that it is to be decided by the Conference: that it will be laid before them, and they will all judge rightly. (A laugh.) What have they done? They have sent a declaration, six months before the Conference, signed by 830 and odd preachers, before they know what the question is; and then they have the impudence, the audacity, to tell you that it will go before the Conference, and that they will judge rightly. (Loud applause.) They contrive every thing just so that you shall not have any check. (Cheers.) As to the Missionary Society again. You feel aggrieved as to the appropriation of the money collected for missionary objects. To whom do you state it? To the committee. I know one circuit that has. The committee took no notice. They published a circular, saying they should still adhere to the plan; and when you say you are dissatisfied, they tell you to "look at our circular." If they were chosen at the annual meeting in Exeter-hall, there might be some check. But they are chosen by the Conference; so that you have not the power, which you might otherwise have, of influencing them to do what is right. Nothing of this kind is brought before you: all is conducted by the Conference, and therefore you have no check as to the misappropriation of your money,—no check upon earth except by the expedient of withholding the money when you feel yourselves aggrieved. (Loud cheers.)

I object to their exercise of power on all these grounds; and it is to points of this kind that I should wish to see reformation in Methodism directed. I would restrict the authority of Conference to religious matters. I would have it declare that Conference should not interfere with any local jurisdiction whatever. (Much cheering.) I would have the Conference consult with the people whenever there is a plan to be devised, or a rule to adopt;—I would have the same Conference so to establish its plans that there may be a sufficient check to the exercise of its power whenever the people feel aggrieved. (Loud cheers.) Now these grievances are attempted to be redressed: we are met together to-night for this purpose, as far as it may lie within the power of this meeting. A Central Association has been formed, and every energy is to be directed to the task. Let us inquire a moment in what way the Conference has endeavoured to meet the attempts that have been made, and are now making, to obtain a redress of grievances. I have looked over the different declarations which they have published,—the Manchester, the Liverpool, the Leeds declarations, and I do not know how many more of the sort:—First, all the preachers in London "declare;"—then all the preachers in the Connexion "declare;"—you find the same names in the one as the other. Then, the preachers composing the committees "declare,"—the very same names. Then a parcel of districts "declare,"—and we find the same names a fourth time. (Loud laughter.) I have looked over these declarations for two purposes; first, to see how far Conference has gone in the difference; how endeavoured to make the matter right, to show that it ought to have this power: then, what it has said against the attempts made in various parts of the kingdom to obtain redress of grievances. With regard to these declarations, you know as well as I do that they are all from one source—that they are all made to pattern. (A laugh.) "Methodism needs no alteration." All that I have seen amounts to this, and no more,—Methodism is altogether perfect. Why, what has this to do with the case? Mr. Rowland says "I am unjustly expelled." "Oh!" say they, "Methodism requires no alteration." (Loud laughter.) They do not tell us *why* he is expelled. Again, I say Methodism ought to be a religious community. "Oh! Methodism requires no alteration." (Much laughter.) This is a flat statement, and it is all that we have got. No: in one of the declarations the individuals say they are perfectly satisfied with it. (A laugh.) Mr. Rowland says, "I am expelled: a great injury has been done to my character, not merely as to my connexion with the Christian church, but in a worldly sense. I feel very much aggrieved." "Oh, hold your tongue, Sir, I am perfectly satisfied." (Much laughter.) A man strikes me a blow on the head; I beg of another, whom I see standing by, to assist me to catch him.—"Oh," says he, "I am perfectly satisfied." (Renewed laughter.) This is absolute nonsense;—it is downright slavery. (Cheers.) If others are perfectly satisfied, they ought to hold their tongues, instead of making all the noise and confusion they can, expressing, I suppose, their boasted satisfaction. (Laughter.)

There is another statement,—that Methodism is as Mr. Wesley left it, and, therefore, it ought not to be disturbed. How the premises bear out the conclusion, I cannot tell. If Mr. Wesley did leave it so,—yet, if its constitution be bad, how any man can be satisfied, merely because it is as Mr. Wesley left it, I cannot tell. But I deny the assumption altogether. I declare that Methodism *could* not be as Mr. Wesley left it. I believe he exercised the power which he possessed, wisely, and for the good of the community. But (and I use it in no bad sense) Mr. Wesley was a despot—he had power to do any thing.



The people gave him that power, and he could do what he liked. But, I say, that no despot *can* communicate his power. (Hear, hear.) It is impossible. If a Government exercises its power in the right of the people, it can transmit its power to generations to come. If the power is despotic, it cannot; the people have no right to interfere with its exercise. (Much applause.) John Wesley could not transmit his power; he knew he could not, and he did not. He never attempted it; he never said he would. He made a deed of declaration, which was a legal instrument, solely constituted for legal purposes, in order to secure to certain preachers the pulpits of Methodist chapels. This was stated to be its only object: (hear, hear, hear :) that Conference should appoint such preachers to those chapels: there power begins and there it ends. (Great applause.) I read this day a portion of that book of M'Donald—that beautiful book, which Mr. Farrer has quoted, in which is an attempt to prove that all power was given to the Conference by that deed. Mr. Wesley only gave them power over themselves and the pulpits where they had to preach, and no other on earth; if he had, Methodism is not so at this day. As to the power which Wesley exercised, it is not at all as he left it. They tried to exercise that power,—they stepped into Wesley's shoes; but the people would not stand it: they brought them to book directly, and the result was the Plan of Pacification. They were not satisfied with it, and got some more concessions at Leeds in 1797. The audacity of these men to declare that after that unrighteous proceeding Methodism is as Wesley left it! The power they exercise under that deed is only according to the terms of it.

Some of you may have read a pamphlet—a wise pamphlet—published by Mr. Vevers. He says, in the most solemn language, that it would be impossible to admit delegates into the Conference. It would interfere with the constitution, and be a direct infringement of the Deed of Declaration, because that deed held the Conference to be composed of preachers and expounders of God's holy word. That is the truth; but it is not the whole truth: it is not half the truth. The deed says, Conference shall be composed of *one hundred* preachers and expounders of God's holy word. Has the Conference kept this part of the deed? It is composed of *four hundred* every year. They have enlarged it. This is obeying a document! (Applause.) They can enlarge it to embrace *all* the preachers, but not to admit *one* of the people. (Hear, hear.) The deed not merely mentions one hundred preachers, but specifies the names of those who were to be admitted at that time:—yet Methodism remains just as Mr. Wesley left it! And because it is just as Mr. Wesley left it we are to sit down and move nothing, however bad it may be. Mr. Wesley was not like these men. He fashioned his system according to the necessities of the times. He set out in his career of evangelizing these kingdoms as a Church-of-England bigot, and gradually became more and more liberal: he altered his plan first to admit lay preachers, and then he gave them powers which had never been contemplated before. His system was a system continually changing to meet the wants of the times, and by this means it has diffused good throughout the whole kingdom. (Cheers.)—This is all we want,—for Methodism to be suited to these times. We feel what our liberties are. (Hear.) We weep when men endeavour to flog us with their rod of unlimited and irresponsible power; and it is right and just that our complaints should be heard. (Applause.) There is a statement in that paper, the *Watchman*, bearing upon this point not a little.—We are told that the grand object of the members of this Association is to bring down the constitution of a religious church to the standard of the world's politics. We are told that this is very wrong,—that the politics of the world are changeable—those of a Christian church immutable, being fixed upon God's word. Now I say that this is contrary to the fact. Does the *Watchman* mean to say that no body of Christians is a Christian church that is not constituted, as to its political arrangements, just as Methodism is? If not, then there is the same changeableness in their administration of religious government, as there is with us in the administration of civil. Facts speak for themselves. Here is the Methodist Society with one form of government, the Episcopalian Society with another, the Independent with a third. I say these are churches of Christ, and the individuals of them members of Christ; yet we are told that these things, thus widely different, are immutable. (Hear, hear.) These things that have changed, do change, and will change, are immutable, and *cannot* be changed. Even the Conference itself, that immutable body which is never to move, has changed continually. It had one sort of polity under Wesley, another sort of polity before the Plan of Pacification, and it has a third sort of polity now; and they themselves are endeavouring to change the polity away from the principles upon which it was established by the Plan of Pacification. This is the argument. I say Mr. Farrer was expelled most unjustly, most unrighteously. I say the Conference is a political union. I say that it ought to confine itself exclusively to religious matters. These men do not say that Mr. Farrer was rightly expelled—that Conference does 'confine itself to religious objects; but we are unchangeable; our policy is not of this world: it remains unchanged! This is just as if a man were to put his foot upon my toe, and I were to say to him, "You hurt me exceedingly, —do take up your foot," and he were to reply, "I cannot lift up my foot; I am unchangeable." (Laughter.) What arrant nonsense! Yet this I declare, as an honest man, contains the substance and germ of the whole argument. (Hear, hear.) In the first number of the *Watchman* this is called an anti-Wesleyan movement. And another thing they state, by which their conduct is to be defended—that is, that the power exercised by them is in consistency with their ministerial rights. I cannot help referring to the subject adverted to by Mr. Pooley, as to the distinction made by the London preachers between "rights" and "privileges." "We are willing," say they, "to uphold the rights of the preachers and the

privileges of the people." I met with a statement in the Minutes of 1829 something worse than this: it is almost word for word, except the substitution of the word *rights* for another. "We are willing to uphold the *duties* of the preachers and the privileges of the people." The meaning is, that it is their "duty" to flog you, and your "privilege" to stand still. (Loud cheers.) I should like to know where this doctrine came from originally. I know very well that it is a doctrine of Popery. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I know of no inherent rights in the preachers of the Gospel. They are given by the people. How can they be otherwise? The people choose a man as their minister,—they either do or they ought to do; they support him; and the inference is, that he ought to promote, not his own interest, but that of the people. (Cheers.) If this be the fact,—if their origin be from the people, and if they are continued by the support of the people, and the object be the promotion of their interests, where can the preacher get his rights but from the people? (Loud applause.) They tell you that God gives the power: I deny it. God gives a minister of the Gospel qualifications, and in the exercise of those qualifications he supports him;—but as to the government of the people, he is to seek his power from them. (Cheers.) I find a distinction in this very *Watchman*, between a minister's personal and his ministerial character. I really could not, if I had not seen that paper, have believed that such a thing could be asserted at this time of day. They give us, who wish for a redress of grievances, credit for speaking well of the personal character of the members of Conference, but of their ministerial character very lightly. I should like to know where this distinction lies—on what it is based. A man's ministerial character, so far as it is recognised, is his personal character. You respect him when he stands up in the pulpit because he does his duty righteously, and to your edification. You respect him as a pastor. You do not respect every man; but him whose personal conduct is consistent with his ministerial character. It is downright Popery, and cannot in the least sway men in these days. In the dark times of Popery, when the law allowed what was called "benefit of clergy," a man who had murdered his brother was not to be hanged because he was a priest. There was a distinction between personal and ministerial character. (Cheers.) This is the very ground of another statement.

We are told by the defenders of the Church of England that if a preacher be ever so immoral, if he be a drunkard or a blasphemer, we ought to go and hear him because he has been regularly ordained. This is a distinction, and the distinction of the *Watchman* amounts to as much. But what has this to do with our preachers? They are not "regularly ordained." They are laymen in every sense in which that word "right" is used. They stand on no higher ground than local preachers as to the possession of any right or character belonging to them as ministers of the Gospel. They never received ordination either as the Presbyterians or the Episcopalians. I believe this subject is treated of in a book called "*Wesleyan Polity*," written by Mr. Welsh; and I have heard the argument in private company. It is this: the minister converts the people, and therefore stands towards them in the relation which a civil governor does not. He makes them people of God, and thence acquires the right to rule over them. Stripped of its Christian phraseology, it is just the argument which has been employed to defend despotic sovereigns over and over again. William the Conqueror conquered England, therefore he acquired a right, irresponsibly and arbitrarily, to rule over it. Surely the cases are parallel. If not, I deny the fact itself. A minister *does not* convert the people to God; a minister has no inherent right to govern; God and Christ have that right, and no other. (Hear, hear.) What the people give they can control, and what they can control they can withdraw. (Hear, hear.) Suppose I am a Wesleyan minister, and a man, by the blessing of God, is converted under me, would it follow that I had a right to govern him? No; for then I could oblige him to continue with me. But the fact is, that he might be an Independent, or any other sectarian, and go to a body exercising quite a different ecclesiastical polity. (Hear, hear.) It is all sophistry together. There are no rights but what you give. (Applause.)

A fourth way by which it is attempted to be defended, and the last that I can meet with, is this:—they tell you that Dr. Warren has made mistakes,—holding one opinion at one time, and another at another; that Mr. Bunting is a very honest man, and the Conference not at all subservient to him; that the Association has committed many blunders; that it had said that it wanted nothing new, and that it did want something new; that the men who have joined it are of no character; and that the laws admit of many quibbles and quirks. What has this to do with the case? It occupies a great part of the declaration, as all are aware. Dr. Warren said one thing at one time and another at another, therefore Mr. Rowland ought to be expelled. (Laughter.) Mr. Bunting is a very honest man, and the Conference not at all subservient to him,—therefore the Institution ought instantly to be adopted. (Laughter.) The Association wants nothing new and wants something new,—therefore nothing is to be done for the benefit of the Connexion. People possessing no respectability of character have joined it,—therefore every thing they say and do must be wrong. The law admits of quibbles and quirks, one man saying the word "at" means "in the presence of;" and another "in conjunction with,"—therefore the law shall remain, and abuses go on from day to day. I say it is all absurdity and nonsense. (Cheers.) I say it serves the purpose of throwing dirt on the individuals belonging to the Association, and diverting attention from the proper matter and object in dispute. (Applause.) The individuals who have joined this Association have done it with the endeavour to redress those grievances which every sensible and unprejudiced mind must have seen to exist in connexion with Methodism. We are told that the Association is unconstitutional. That any man

should not blush while he says it! That the meeting together to consult about the grievances which you feel,—the speaking upon the subject of redressing the evils under which you labour,—the endeavouring to spread universal liberty throughout the Methodist Connexion, should be called unconstitutional. What a reflection upon the Methodist Constitution! They do not say it is wrong; they do not enter into the question; they do not say the mere meeting to consult about the best way in which your grievances may be met, is wrong. No: it is unconstitutional. I say it is not. I wish some one were here who professes this doctrine: I should like to ask him what he means by the constitution of Methodism; even if contrary to the laws which have been passed, that does not prove it unconstitutional to object to any particular law by which the operations of Methodism are regulated? Yet if it were, it can be defended on higher grounds than those they call constitutional. It is with the utmost propriety that we endeavour to pull them down from the height which they have assumed in order to injure us. (Hear, hear.) Why do *they* associate? To collect their power, and diffuse it through all the land. Therefore, to be up with them; to have the advantages which they have, we associate also. It is perfectly Methodistical. (Cheers.) It may be defended still more on the ground of its necessity. What can we do but associate? You bring one of these questions before a meeting constituted according to Methodist law, and they will not let it pass. The superintendent will leave the chair, and then you may hold a meeting which is unconstitutional. It is impossible to get a constitutional meeting for this purpose. Then, if you fix him in the chair, as we did at Dudley, by not letting him select his stewards; (loud laughter;) or as at Stourbridge, where they would not let him leave till he behaved like a gentleman; (renewed laughter;) if you could do this, or get a constitutional meeting, still they would not listen to your representations: or they would treat your appeal as the appeals in the case of Mr. Stephens were treated at the last Conference. The very necessity obliges you, if you would do any good, to meet together, and imitate their noble example. (Laughter.) You must make yourselves a Conference, and, if you can, place yourselves in the situation in which they have placed themselves with reference to the Methodist body, and all you want to do will be done. (Cheers.) Then they say again, the agitation which this Association produces is very evil indeed,—all sorts of evil; it throws people's minds off the proper point, and all the rest. This is their deception again; as if the Conference and the Methodist Connexion had been at peace since the days of Wesley. Ever since I have known it, and that is ever since I knew about any thing, there has been agitation year after year. The Methodist Connexion has been all along the most dissatisfied body on the face of the globe. I do not wonder: there has been reason for it; but how inconsistent for these men to bring forward such an argument, who have never been able to keep the society at peace themselves! Agitate, they tell you, and you do evil. Agitation, of itself, is only an evil when it is built on evil ground,—when it associates itself with evil principles. But when it stands on a good principle, agitation is good; and God uses agitation. "Be zealous in every good work." If a man can prove what he is about to do, to be good, he has no right to be deterred by the cry of "agitation!" We have quite a sufficient cause to agitate. Arbitrary power is in existence: individual oppression is exercised throughout the length and breadth of the Connexion. The Gospel was a system of agitation,—the Reformation was a system of agitation,—Methodism itself was agitation from one end of the country to the other. (Cheers.) I should like to know how much of the agitation belongs to the individuals who cause the complaints. (Cheers.) I should think a great part:—they commit the wrong, that is one part;—the credit of the grievances belongs to them, and so ought, therefore, the credit of the agitation for the removal of those grievances. (Applause.) The case of the Dudley quarterly meeting is in point. There were two resolutions to be brought forward. They were sore ones, certainly, but we were all agreed, and they would have passed unanimously, almost. There would have been no agitation,—we wished to have the matter settled before the stewards were appointed.—"No, you shall not," said the superintendent;—and *there* was agitation. Then he said, "I cannot put these resolutions." Well, some one else was obliged,—and so we accomplished our object through much agitation. The tumult was caused, not by us, but by the men who opposed us. (Hear, hear.) The truth is, that this complaint about agitation is only because it is agitation against the preachers. (Loud applause.) If that were not the case, they would not care two-pence about it. It is agitation *against*, and not *for* them—and that makes all the difference.

Another complaint is, that it is exceedingly wicked to affect the funds,—but upon this point Mr. Farrer has forestalled me. ("Go on.") It is not because I do not wish to contribute to the funds, for I declare that I shall not keep one farthing from the cause of God and truth, which I should have contributed had it not occurred. (Cheers.) Let them say they are willing to do what is right:—let the Missionary Society say they are willing to submit to the opinions of the subscribers:—let them come and say they are anxious to have these differences amicably settled,—and we are content. (Hear, hear.) It is most galling, most degrading to be looked at, as if we were wanting in Christian charity, when we are only resorting to the sole means of defence which are left us. They send down from Conference, and say they will not suffer their discipline to be interfered with. They ride the high horse; they have shut themselves in against every other argument, every other appeal to their hearts or heads, against every other appeal than what lies to their pockets. Are we not acting wisely, then, in thus "stopping their supplies?" I can see the way as clearly and as plainly as I ever saw any thing. Mr. Bunting might tell us that we should injure the Contingent Fund; and I am willing to admit that the preachers in the smaller

circuits might suffer : but let the Conference avoid this, by a Christian an amicable compliance with the wishes of the people. (Hear.) I hold it to be a matter of right and just principles that I should contribute to the support of the ministers of the religious community of which I approve. I do not approve of the present constitution of the Conference, of its appropriation of the money of the Contingent Fund, and of the present state of the Book Room ; and, therefore, like a reasonable man, I refuse to support those institutions which I do not approve of. (Cheers.) Every thing that is consistent with Christian charity and Christian truth I am willing to support. (Applause.) Again, they say " These agitators have such different opinions that it is impossible to satisfy them all. The people in Liverpool hold one opinion, in Manchester another, in Dudley a third." This was said to my face at the Dudley quarterly meeting. I said to the person who addressed me, " Because Mr. Farrer holds a different opinion from me, am I to hold my tongue ?" But it is all illusion. There is no difference of opinion about the existence of abuses. (Hear.) I believe every body sees clearly what they are, and public opinion, of which I know a great deal, is gradually verging towards certain grand points. The people are not disputing about mere forms or laws ; they are disputing about the grand principle as to whether we shall or shall not have, in some way satisfactory to all, a share in the government. (Loud cheers.) Look at the resolutions signed by forty-five trustees in London, and compare them with the requisitions of the Association as read this evening by Mr. Picten, without referring to the order in which they stand, and see if they do not exactly coincide in the main points. And though my opinion may not exactly coincide with another man's, yet I am willing to give it up to the majority, in favour of the general object, as, I have no doubt, is the disposition of us all. (Cheers, and exclamations of " It is.") This is all I have to say. This is the way in which we are attacked. Suppose we turn round and attack our opponents in the same way. I am not going to attribute motives, but I should like to bring down the signers of the declaration against us to the testimony of God's word, and see in what relation they stand to the Bible. They tell us they are the repositories of Christian truth,—that to attack them is to touch the cause of God. Did not the Jews do the same ? Did not they say the temple of the Lord was theirs ? And did not God tell them by his prophet that their words were lying words ? They professed to attach great importance to names, and forms, and political arrangements ; and what say the Methodists of this day ? " Our venerable founder, the Rev. John Wesley, Master of Arts." Nothing about principles: nothing about scripture. Mr. Wesley is all in all. What did the Jews say to the men who stood by our Lord ? " Ye are his disciples, but we are Moses's disciples." See the favour they show ; setting moral character aside in those who will go through thick and thin to support them. Is it not just as the Pharisees, who took tithe of mint and cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law, judgment, righteousness, and truth ? See how the President is exalted and praised as if he were Archbishop of Canterbury, and the weight which his name is supposed to carry throughout the Connexion, as if he were better than other men. What says the Scripture ? " The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but let it not be so among you. If any man will be your master, let him be your servant." Then look at their irresponsibility and their infallibility. They are immaculate, and he that touches their character touches the apple of the Almighty's eye. They tell us they are men of respectability,—we are not. What was it that condemned the Pharisee ? He said, " God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." They slander our private character ; ought we to be ashamed ? Was it not so with the Saviour himself ? Was it not so with his apostles, who were persecuted to death ? They tell us we agitate. So said the Pharisees. " These men that turn the world upside down are come hither also." They want to make us out disaffected to the institutions of our country. So did they to our Lord : they showed him a penny in order to betray him into something contrary to the usurpation of Cæsar. They expel without cause. So did the Jewish Sanhedrim expel the blind man, because he would not subscribe to their doctrines. They anathematize us as deserving the judgments of God. So did James and John when they wanted to call fire from heaven on their enemies. I say I do not tax them with these motives, but I say that their statements, fairly judged, and placed against the word of God, prove to be lighter than vanity. (Applause.) One word in conclusion. Whatever we say, whatever we do, let us preserve the love and the fear of God. There is this evil in agitation, which attaches to all agitation,—it is likely to throw the mind off its proper centre ; but it need not be so with us. It ought to drive us oftener to our closets, to bring us down more frequently to our knees, amidst the struggles, tumults, and contentions that surround us, that we may pray to Almighty God to prosper the Jerusalem in which we live. (Cheers.) Let us imitate the example of those who have gone before us, that through faith and patience we may inherit the promises.

In us let all mankind behold  
How Christians liv'd in days of old ;  
Mighty their envious foes to move,  
A proverb of reproach—and love.

Oh ! might my lot be cast with these,  
The least of Jesu's witnesses ;  
Oh, that my Lord would count me meet,  
To wash his dear disciples' feet.

This, only this, do I require,  
Thou knowest 'tis all my heart's desire,  
Freely, what I receive, to give  
The servant of thy church to live.



Mr. GORDON here retired, but immediately rose again, for the purpose of calling the attention of the meeting to the declaration before referred to, which was to be found signed by forty-five trustees. It was most admirable; and he thought all trustees should sign it, for a great number of signatures would make a greater way through the Connexion than any thing else. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. WALTHER here stood up, at the other end of the room, and wished to know if it was the intention of the meeting to adopt the sentiments of Mr. Gordon as theirs. All that Mr. Gordon had said had gone against the constitution of Methodism, as a constitution. He was not aware, till now, that there could be such a thing as a constitution without laws. There was a law of the Connexion which prohibited illegal meetings, and he wished to know how the Conference could recognise the Association in the face of that law. He appealed to the Chairman whether, at Mount-pleasant Chapel, Mr. Marsden did not tell him, if he would abandon the Association, he would be glad to receive him. (Much cheering and laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN.—I believe it is true that Mr. Marsden said they would be very glad to receive me, if I would renounce the Association; and it only affords a demonstration that a reformer, in their eyes, is worse than a sinner. (Loud applause.)

Mr. WALTHER was proceeding with his observations upon the dispute between the Conference and the Association, when

Mr. GORDON put it to the Chairman whether any individual had a right to interrupt the meeting, except for the sake of explanation.

The CHAIRMAN thought they certainly did not come there to hear speeches against their right to associate. Mr. Gordon would, no doubt, answer any remarks that appeared to apply to him.

Mr. GORDON begged to say that he did not consider the Association responsible for any thing that he had uttered. Mr. Walthew had asked him if he ever knew a constitution without laws. Whatever that gentleman might say about there being no constitution without law, he (Mr. Gordon) did not admit that the laws were the constitution. He had intimated that, because there was a law in the Plan of Pacification at all bearing on the case, they ought to be quiet; but he (Mr. G.) submitted whether it was right for people, under a free Government, to sit down without getting bad laws altered for what they considered just. (Loud cheers.) He would like to ask an individual holding such opinions *how any reform could be effected upon his principles?* (Hear, hear.) Those who brought about the revolution of 1688 broke through many laws, and yet he had no doubt Mr. Walthew would allow that that revolution was very desirable and praiseworthy. Luther, if he recollected right, was the greatest law breaker that ever lived. (Cheers.) It was with laws as with every thing else: it was a virtue to keep them as long as they were just,—it was a virtue to get them changed when they were unjust. He begged, finally, to observe, that it was somewhat strange that that individual, while blaming him for speaking at an illegal meeting, should have spoken at one himself. (Much cheering and laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN said he understood from Mr. Walthew that Mr. Marsden had said he would allow the subject of the dispute to be discussed at the quarterly meeting.

Mr. WALTHER.—Not at the quarterly meeting. He said the proper channels should be opened. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN.—In my hearing he did not say any such thing. In answer to Mr. Dixon I said, "Sir, if you and Mr. Jackson would have admitted the matters in dispute to be discussed at the local meetings, the Association would not have been in existence. (Loud cheers, and cries of "Hear, hear.") And I did not get one word in reply.

The Chairman then intimated that the business of the meeting was concluded, and begged to remind the members of the Association that it was at present more their duty to suffer than to act, and that they would be but sorry followers of John Wesley if they could not proceed on that principle. He had to apprise them that their friends would now make a collection towards carrying out the objects of the Association. He had only further to say that that Association identified itself with no *political* opinion whatever.

The collection having then been made, a doxology was sung, and the Rev. Mr. Gordon pronounced the blessing, after which, at about eleven o'clock, the meeting separated.

### MR. HENRY JOYCE'S CASE.

EXTRAORDINARY SCENE AT THE TRIAL AND EXPULSION OF MR. HENRY JOYCE  
A CLASS LEADER IN THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT, AT THE LEADERS'  
MEETING, IN WESLEY CHAPEL, ON THE 17th OF DECEMBER, 1834.

Rev. G. MARSDEN, in the Chair.

After the usual business of the meeting was over, Mr. Marsden made a few remarks on the present disturbed state of the society, and then alluded to a document published in the papers, to which the names of several official persons were appended, among which were those of two brethren present, Messrs. Beynon and Joyce.



Mr. Beynon's case was then called upon; but as it appeared, upon inquiry, that the country Trustees of Woolton Chapel had not been summoned to attend, Mr. Beynon demurred to his trial being proceeded with, and it was accordingly postponed till the next Friday evening.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Joyce will now answer to his charge.

Mr. JOYCE then read the summons sent by Mr. Stamp, which he received near ten o'clock on Tuesday night, requiring his appearance on the following evening, at seven, to answer to a charge to be then preferred against him. Business not allowing him to be present, his attendance was put off till the next week. Mr. Joyce here submitted whether it was fair that his notice should have been kept back almost to the last moment, when Mr. Marsden sent word to *his* friends on the previous Sabbath day, requesting them to be present. "I will leave it," said he, "to this meeting to judge of this stretch of charity towards me. Proceed, Sir, with your proof."

Mr. MARSDEN.—Mr. Ashton, I believe, will bring the charge.

Mr. ASHTON.—The charge of which brother Joyce is accused is contained in the note he has read,—that of being a member of the Wesleyan Association.

Mr. JOYCE.—My name appearing in a newspaper is no proof.

Mr. ASHTON.—Do you contradict it?

Mr. JOYCE.—That is not the question; bring your proof.

Mr. ASHTON.—Are you guilty or not guilty?

Mr. JOYCE.—I will not plead; bring your proof.

Mr. CROOK (the barrister).—This is quibbling. In those cases judgment must be passed by default.

Mr. STAMP.—Does Mr. Joyce deny being a member of the Association?

Mr. JOYCE.—Am I to understand that I should contradict it by means of the press?

Mr. STAMP.—Certainly.

Mr. JOYCE.—Then, Sir, on the same argument, I would say that I hold in my hand a paper which states that the Rev. G. Marsden was paid £100 out of the Contingent Fund, collected for the purpose of extending the preaching of the Gospel in the poor circuits in *this kingdom*, to defray his expenses to Canada and back. Pray, Sir, (to Mr. Marsden,) have you contradicted this?

Mr. ASHTON.—Shame, shame!

Mr. STAMP here, with both hands lifted up, *vociferated loudly*,—Mr. Chairman, I move that you put the motion of judgment.

Mr. CROOK.—I second the motion.

Mr. BEYNON here observed, that the laws of our country respected the person of the accused: that the Judge, the jury, as well as the law, held him innocent up to the moment of his guilt being proved; and that no man was bound to criminate himself.

Mr. STAMP.—I submit that Mr. Beynon be required to take no part in this proceeding, he himself being under charge.

Mr. Marsden then proceeded to read the law of 1796.

Mr. JOYCE.—That is no law in Methodism, Sir. (Uproar, "Chair, chair.")

Mr. COULTHURST called the attention of the meeting to the standing and authorized laws of our Connexion, and, after very offensive and reiterated opposition from Mr. Crook, read the law of 1797, which states "No person shall be appointed a leader or steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a leaders' meeting."

Mr. MARSDEN then read the law of 1796.

Mr. JOYCE.—I contend this is no law.

Mr. CROOK and Mr. WILSON (attorney-at-law) called out "Chair, chair! Motion, motion!"

Mr. JOYCE.—I beseech you, brethren, take care in what you are about to do at this moment. I cannot be legally expelled but by your vote. If you receive that to be law which is about to be uttered from the chair you will make a rod to beat your own backs with.

Mr. CROOK.—Order, order, order!

Mr. JOYCE.—It was said of old, and I take up the same language, "Woe unto you, lawyers!" you do not know the laws of Methodism yourselves, and those who do know them you are come here to condemn. (A laugh.)

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brethren, those of you who are of opinion that this law is broken will signify it by holding up your hands. (There were about six hands held up.)

Mr. COULTHURST and others cried out "Shame, shame!"

Mr. MARSDEN.—On the contrary. None.

Mr. JOYCE.—Sir, may I be permitted to say a few words to the meeting?

Mr. STAMP.—NO!!

Mr. JOYCE.—Monstrous! I never witnessed such cruelty.

Mr. CROOK.—What is his name?—his Christian name?

Mr. BEYNON.—His name is Henry Joyce.

Mr. CROOK.—Then, I shall not again call him Brother.

Mr. BEYNON.—Then, Sir, I tell you that is not acting as a Christian or a Brother would do, under similar circumstances.

Mr. MARSDEN.—I now pronounce Brother Joyce to be no longer a member of the Methodist Society.

Mr. JOYCE.—Thank you, Sir. —Mr. Joyce was proceeding to make a remark when he was stopped by

Mr. WILSON.—You are not now a member of this meeting; and now I tell you that I am here as a trustee of this chapel to keep peace and order, and if I saw any conduct such as was witnessed in another place, without asking leave from the chair, I would put you out of the chapel; and I now warn you not to enter this chapel again.

Mr. JOYCE.—Hear, hear!

After this, several members of the meeting retired, exulting in what they had done.

Mr. JOYCE, addressing himself to the Rev. Mr. Dixon, then said, Will you, Sir, allow me to come and hear you preach?

Mr. DIXON.—O yes; certainly.

Mr. WILSON.—Yes; and you will all think it an honour to come back and hear him.

Mr. JOYCE.—After the language I have just heard I am glad that I have my name in another place; I consider it an honour to be a member of the Association, and, by the help of God, I will co-operate with my brethren to agitate the whole Society until we shake your system to its very centre.

Mr. WILSON then carried his threat into execution, and proceeded, to eject Mr. Joyce from the vestry; in this he succeeded easily, as Mr. Joyce did not offer much resistance.

Mr. WILSON, upon his return, very gratuitously made some further sweeping observations on his ownership of the premises, as one of the trustees.

Mr. BEYNON very coolly observed that it might be found, on another day, that the right of property in the chapels rested in quite another quarter.

Mr. WILSON, hastily.—If you make another assertion of that kind I will serve you as I have served Mr. Joyce.

Mr. BEYNON.—I am not much afraid of that; and I tell you more, Sir; you have said that the members of the Association are bad men,—but I hesitate not to say that they will not shrink a moment in comparison, for piety or talent, with any number of men you can bring against them from the Preachers' party. Mr. Beynon further declared, in the presence of Mr. Jos. Russell, Mr. Nixon, and Mr. Taylor, that the Association never would have existed, nor would he have joined it, if the Preachers had not invariably resisted their claims to be heard by Conference, through the medium of the quarterly meetings.

Thus ended the mock trial of one who has been twenty years a member of the Methodist Society, and has been *put out* by a few members of a faction which is striving to uphold a system now tottering to its fall. It is not based on truth and righteousness, and, therefore, cannot stand; by the force of tyranny and oppression it may be dominant for a while, but it wants the destiny of immortality;—finally, it will receive its reward.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The report of the meeting at the Music-hall, on Thursday evening, has necessarily displaced a number of articles, amongst the rest—The continuation of the strictures on the *Methodist Magazine* for January—Mr. Grindrod's continuation of his address—The report of the expulsion of Messrs. Morgan, Christian, and Bridson—The communication from Todmorden—and accounts of the proceedings at various quarterly meetings.


The extracts recommended by our respected friend T. P. R., of the Camelford circuit, shall be inserted as soon as possible.

We have to thank G., of Manchester, for the additional authority respecting the burning of the addresses. It shall have a place in an early number.

We have also to acknowledge communications from Mr. Grindrod, of Manchester, *An Eye and Ear Witness*, Carlisle, L. W., Liverpool, and T. N., Oldham, the last of whom forgot to pay the postage.

We sincerely sympathize with *An Enemy to Duplicity*, Sheerness, under the circumstances in which he and his friends are placed. His communication shall have speedy insertion. In the meantime we must all endure hardness as good soldiers, and, notwithstanding all the machinations and *duplicity* of our enemies, eventually we shall, we must succeed.

We are glad to hear from Hull that the supply of the "Lantern" has not been nearly equal to the demand. The arrangements mentioned in the letter of our correspondent shall be attended to.

 In consequence of an extraordinary press of matter, and the space occupied by the report of the Music-hall meeting, it is our intention to publish, next Wednesday, a supplementary number, the same size and price as the present.

Liverpool; printed for the Methodist Association, by EGERTON SMITH and Co., Lord-street, and sold by Messrs. SIMPKIN and MARSHALL, London; J. AINSWORTH and Co., and Mr. ROBERTS Manchester; BEAN and SON, and HEATON, Briggate, Leeds; Mr. JOHN RAYNER, and Messrs. FURDON and BROWN, Hull; and by all other Booksellers.

Orders and Communications, (post paid,) may be addressed to the Secretaries, at the Office of the Association, Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool.

The Manchester Office of the Association is over the *Times* Office, Market-street.

Subscriptions will be received by W. SMITH, Esq. (the Chairman,) Reddish-house, near Stockport; W. WOOD, Esq. Newton-street, Manchester; at the Offices of the Association, Manchester and Liverpool; and by the Officers and Committee of any Branch Association.

Agents are wanted in most of the Circuit Towns, for the sale of the "Watchman's Lantern" and the other publications of the Association. Applications, (post paid,) to be made as above.

# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER.

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No. 5.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4, 1835.

Price 1½d.

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THE METHODIST MAGAZINE FOR JANUARY, 1835.

(Continued from page 36.)

We have not yet done with this warlike manifesto of the preachers. "They feel themselves called upon to avow, that whatever may be the immediate result of the present agitations, they cannot, and they will not, *betray the trust* which, under God, they have received from their venerated fathers in the Gospel." Now, what is this "trust" which they have received from their "venerated fathers," and which they express such an anxiety to preserve inviolate? With what particular portions of the polity of Methodism are they legally intrusted? These are questions to which we shall endeavour briefly to reply. Mr. Wesley's celebrated Deed Poll of 1784, after defining the term "Conference of the people called Methodists" to mean the one hundred senior preachers, confers upon them authority to admit candidates into the ministry, and appoint preachers to the respective chapels. Many of our readers will probably be surprised to learn that this is the entire sum and substance of the authority inherited by the Conference from Mr. Wesley. From the strange and mysterious tone adopted by the preachers in referring to this famous document, one would suppose that it conferred upon them absolute and unlimited authority, both spiritual and temporal, and that it operated as a talisman to secure them from the consequences of any acts, however arbitrary and oppressive. Whenever the slightest alteration has been proposed *on the part of the people* in any portion of the Methodist church government, an ominous shake of the head, and the awful words "Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration," have been sufficient at once to put an extinguisher upon the proposition. The only legal importance which attaches to this deed is its reference to, and connexion with, the trust deeds of those chapels which are settled on the "Conference plan." If by "not betraying their trust" the preachers mean that they will still continue to appoint ministers to the chapels and preaching-houses, we reply that, so far as we are aware, they have never been required to resign that part of their "trust." If they mean that they will still maintain in all their purity the original doctrines of Methodism, that sacred deposit, compared with which all their other "trusts" sink into utter insignificance, we answer, they *dare not* do otherwise. From the instant that they sanction the promulgation from the pulpits of any "other doctrines than those which are contained in certain notes upon the New Testament, and the first four volumes of sermons published by the late Rev. John Wesley,"\* from that

\* Vide the "Model Deed of Trust for settling the Methodist Chapels."

moment they cease to exist as a legal Conference, and every vestige of their power over the chapels is for ever destroyed.

But there are yet other "trusts" which the preachers have had committed to their charge. Disappointed and irritated as the Methodist societies were at the undue assumption of power by the Conference after the death of Mr. Wesley, still, when they were at length goaded into something like concessions; when they tardily and reluctantly relinquished a portion of that arbitrary power, to which they clung with the utmost tenacity to the very last moment; after they had, "voluntarily and in good faith," to use their own words, signed their names to the regulations agreed upon between them and the delegates in 1797, the people (good simple souls) were satisfied. Reposing a cheerful confidence in the wisdom and piety of their ministers, they never dreamt of requiring from *them* a guarantee for their performance of the contract, but placed in their hands an uncontrolled, an unlimited "trust." This "trust" they have repeatedly and flagrantly betrayed. Need we particularize the instances? Shall we enter minutely into the disgraceful catalogue of breaches of faith and violations of law? To those who have been at all observant of recent occurrences in the Methodist societies, it is not necessary; they are but too notorious. Those who wish for information, we refer to the Declaration of the London Trustees, inserted in the *Christian Advocate* newspaper.

From the frequency with which the changes are rung in this Declaration on the expressions "essential constitution of Methodism," "the essential principles of our constitution," "the great principles of Methodism,"\* which the preachers express themselves so determined to preserve, an uninformed reader would imagine that the ruthless designs of that dark band of conspirators, yclept the Association, aimed at shutting up the chapels, exploding the system of itinerancy, prohibiting class meetings and love feasts, and narrowing and destroying that expansive energy in proclaiming the Gospel both in the highways and by-paths of the world, which has, until recently, been the glory of Methodism. For what are "the great principles of Methodism" of which we hear so much? Let Mr. Wesley speak,—

"There is no other religious society under heaven which requires nothing of men, in order to their admission into it, but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you; you cannot be admitted into the Church, or society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinions with them, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think. Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship, but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be it what it may. Now, I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is allowed, or has been allowed, since the age of the apostles! Here is our glorying. And a glorying peculiar to us! What society shares it with us?"—*Wesley's Works*, 8vo, vol. 6, page 153.

If this characteristic of the Methodist Society, "this peculiar glorying" has been, or is in danger of being destroyed, by whom has the death blow been inflicted? Not surely by those who now plead for the right of private judgment; for the unfettered expression of opinion;

\* This last expression, however, has tacked to it what the lawyers would call a saving clause; it is the principles of Methodism "*as at present constituted*" which our preachers are so anxious to uphold, that is, with the "explanatory amplifications" which give the laws any meaning or no meaning at all, just as the superintendent preacher, who combines in himself the offices of accuser, jury, and judge, may see fit.



for the endeavour to restore Methodism to that state of religious liberty from which it has been so unjustly removed. But, we may be told "the *essential* constitution of Methodism" means the absolute, uncontrolled authority of the Conference over the people; and this we strongly suspect, divested of all circumlocution, is the meaning our reverend fathers intend to convey. But this authority to be "*essential*" must be unchangeable, for those parts of a constitution which change with circumstances cannot be its *essential* principles. Now the authority of the Conference has changed. It was one thing in 1791, another in 1797, and still another at the present day. Nay, the very power itself, exercising the authority, has been repeatedly subject to variation. At one time we see the supreme power wielded (and that most righteously) by a single individual. At another, the reins of government are held by a Conference of 100 preachers, according to seniority. Subsequently we perceive this Conference benevolently extending its arms to embrace the number of 400, each of whom is endowed with a certain fraction of "*ministerial rights*" and Conferential dignity.

The power itself then cannot be essential, for we have seen that a portion of it has at different periods been relinquished, and subsequently resumed. Neither does the *essence* of the Methodist constitution consist in the supreme authority being vested in certain parties, for in this respect also it has been subject to fluctuations. What then is the inference,—but that the essence of Methodism is not merely a certain power exercised over the people by irresponsible parties; nor is it identified with the persons by whom this authority is claimed, but something far different, and of a much more holy and spiritual nature? "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Methodism, surely, ought not merely to be characterized by a particular set of laws, by the exercise of certain powers over the people by their ministers,—be the exercise of that power righteous or unrighteous,—but by the preaching of experimental religion and practical piety; by the high standard of holiness at which it aims; by the apostolic fervour and laborious zeal of its preachers, and the simplicity and godly sincerity of its people; and by the extension of its privileges, with full liberty of conscience, to all who desire to save their souls. These are, or ought to be, "*the essential principles*" of Methodism. When they cease to be so, the organization may still remain; the system of itinerancy may continue perfect in all its parts; the preachers may rule with a rod of iron over a people who hug their chains; but the volatile essence will be evaporated, and what will be left but a "*caput mortuum*" of dull formality, a dry *residuum* of capabilities, without energies to use them? Again, let the "*principles of our constitution*" be what they may, granting, for argument's sake, all that these reverend declarationists require, to be essential principles, they ought to be consistent; they ought not to lead to the advocacy of one set of opinions at one time, and another set at another time. Compare, for instance, the following Minutes of two separate Conferences, one in 1747, the other 1834:—

1747. Question. What instance or ground is there in the New Testament for a national church?—A. We know of none at all; we apprehend it to be merely a political institution.

In 1834, the Conference passed a resolution "That the speeches of Brother Stephens, the avowed object of which is a separation of Church and State, are directly at variance with the general sentiments of Mr.



Wesley and the Conference, and inconsistent with those sentiments of respect and affection towards the Church of England, which our Connexion has *from the beginning openly professed and honourably maintained.*"

Now we do not in this place offer any opinion on the disputed question of the union of Church and State; but this we do say, that the above Minutes are inconsistent with each other, and do not manifest the predominance of any principles of ecclesiastical polity which are either fixed or "essential." Many other instances of similar inconsistency might be adduced, but this may suffice.

But the climax of absurdity, the very quintessence of "*humbug*," (to quote the expressive phraseology of the Rev. Samuel Jackson,) is the point so happily touched upon by Mr. Gordon, at the late meeting in Liverpool. Let our readers picture to themselves a deliberative assembly, exercising legislative powers, such as the Houses of Parliament, putting forth ostentatiously their all but unanimous determination on certain subjects closely connected with the welfare of the community, and then hypocritically calling on their constituents to bring the matter before them, and it shall have a patient and impartial hearing. Fancy the twelve Judges in Westminster Hall expecting an important trial to come before them, declaring themselves bigoted partisans, and then gravely telling the suitors that even-handed justice, without fear or favour, shall be dealt out to them; or imagine any other absurdity or improbability, and it will scarcely equal, and certainly cannot surpass, the effrontery of the present "Declaration." We are told in page 65 of the *Magazine*, "that the ordinary tribunals of Methodism are competent to meet the case, and would do full justice to all parties." Are there any "tribunals of Methodism" in which the preachers are not supreme? By way then, we suppose, of showing their impartiality and the competency of these tribunals to do "full justice to all parties," they "enter their solemn protest" against the proceedings of one of these very parties, to whom they profess their intention of doing full justice. To wind up the Declaration in a suitable manner, they conclude by exhortations to "cultivate *mutual charity* and peace." This comes with a most ineffable grace in the same publication which states, page 37, "that persons should openly practise these *abominations*, (that is, being members of the Association,) and yet profess allegiance to Christ, and talk of communion with him, is as downright fanaticism as would be the attempt to unite practical Christianity with drunkenness, or with cursing and swearing." Can the force of hypocrisy go farther? Yes it may; mark what follows. At page 65 we are told that "no cause of complaint, however just or aggravated, can justify the use of unlawful means for redress, *when a legitimate and competent tribunal exists.*" This is signed by the Rev. Joseph Taylor, President of the Conference, the very man who has actually addressed a circular letter to the superintendents of circuits, positively directing them, "in case any attempt should be made to introduce into any of the official meetings a discussion upon the disputed topics now agitating the Connexion, *by all means to repress it*; and, if it cannot otherwise be effected, to leave the chair, declare the meeting dissolved, AND THUS PREVENT ANY THING IN THE SHAPE OF COMPLAINT PASSING THROUGH THE REGULARLY CONSTITUTED MEETINGS, TO THE NEXT CONFERENCE !!!"

We will not exhaust the time and patience of our readers by wading through all the inconsistencies and absurdities to be met with in these

harmless fulminations. There is one other paper, however, so *naïve* in its character, that we cannot resist the temptation of making a remark or two on it. It is on the education of missionaries, p. 39. After administering the usual dose of flattery "to that distinguished minister, the Rev. Jabez Bunting," the writer proceeds to describe the work of a missionary, and to explain his necessary qualifications. On this point let us first consult Mr. Wm. Dawson, of Barnbow, near Leeds, a gentleman who has figured with as much *eclat* on a missionary platform as any of "the cloth," the Rev. John Anderson himself not excepted. What says he? Preaching a missionary sermon in Norfolk, he described the missionary field as an inclosure, and having inclosed this field,

"Now (says he) who are the most proper labourers? Do we want mathematicians, men of learning from the College to teach them Greek, and Hebrew, and Latin? No, (said the preacher,) we want labourers, men that will work, and strip to their shirts, and work, and take the axe, and the pick, and clear away the rubbish," and so on.

But what says the writer in the *Magazine*?—

"On his voyage abroad a missionary has to associate with gentlemen of the first talents, who are going to fill offices in the various departments of Government. He is expected to conduct the religious services of the Sabbath, and to take part in the daily efforts to instruct and please his companions on the deep." "On arriving at our Eastern possessions, and taking up his residence in any of the various nations in those vast regions, the missionary will have to take a part with able chaplains, &c. &c. and in corresponding with the Government and its officers." Again: "With whom will the missionary have to associate, and to whom will he minister among the heathen?—the learned and haughty Brahmin, the proud nobleman, the bold and superstitious peasant, the ascetic, the philosopher, the magician, the poet, and the believer in the Koran."

Ye labouring poor, who subscribe your hard-earned weekly pennies; ye collectors, who diligently labour on in your arduous vocation from year to year, without fee or reward; when you hear that your missionaries have to associate with "gentlemen of the first talents," with "the philosopher and *the magician*," and, above all, to conduct "a correspondence with the Government and its officers," your exertions and diligence will be redoubled. Well may our writer exclaim,—“Who would like to go unprepared into *such* a scene?” “Will the Methodists allow their agents to go into *such* a work without due preparation?” Surely not. After this affecting appeal, the college funds,—we beg pardon,—the funds of the Theological Institution will be replenished to overflowing. As the Institution is established ostensibly for the purpose, in part, of instructing the missionaries in the languages of the countries to which they are sent, and as it cannot be doubted for a moment but it will receive the support to which it is so well entitled, we shall be having reverend professors of every dialect under the sun, and the Hoxton institution will resemble the confusion of tongues at the building of Babel. If it is not to teach these languages, where is the use of it to the missionaries? If this Institution be all that its advocates represent, they could well afford to have consulted the societies on the subject. But we are told that the *end* designed by the Institution is so desirable, that any irregularity in the *means* adopted is highly excusable, on account of the benefits to be derived. What says the committee appointed by the Conference to manage the funds?—

"Those ages of darkness and despotism are for ever gone by when it was held that the end might justify the means, a doctrine which glutted the dungeons of the Inquisition with victims, and bound martyrs to the stake, but which is totally

opposed to the scriptural injunction 'to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, or to do unto others as we wish they should do unto us.'"

We must now take our leave of the declarationists and apologists, whether lay or clerical, and, in their own words, we would address our readers, and say—"Watch ye;"—"Stand fast in the faith;"—"Quit you like men;"—"Be strong."—"Whether, we ask you, will the work dear to our hearts be promoted or frustrated by an Association," the object of which is to break down the ecclesiastical tyranny which has paralyzed the usefulness of the Connexion, and which aims at still further degrading the people?" "It can scarcely be expected that in so large a body differences will not occasionally occur; but this, let it be remembered, is a question which touches its vital existence."

### MR. TREFFRY'S ADDRESS.

The January number of the *Methodist Magazine* contains an address delivered by the Rev. R. Treffry to the preachers admitted into Full Connexion at City-road Chapel, London, during the Conference of 1834. It is quite a relief to turn from the turgid bombast, the slander, and misrepresentations with which this *Magazine* abounds, to the perusal of this excellent address, to the merits of which we bear our cordial testimony. Had the advice which it gives been acted upon by our preachers generally; had the Christian philanthropy with which it is imbued, the devotion to their pastoral duties which it enjoins, been more attended to, we should have heard less of "*ministerial rights*" and Conferential authority. The pious, the good of all denominations, are naturally fond of peace; it is only when submission becomes no longer a virtue that they can be roused to action. Had our preachers only paid that attention to their flocks which Scripture enjoins, and which common sense would dictate, the Association would never have been called into existence. The principles of evil might still lie concealed,—the bonds might be gradually entwining round us, but they would have been silken fetters which would scarcely have been felt. It is only when "the iron enters into our souls,"—when insult is added to injury, that our feelings and our duties both impel us in the same direction, and that resistance is stamped with the fullest approbation of our consciences. We present our readers with the following extract from Mr. Treffry's address, bearing so pointedly, as it does, on the question of the Theological Institution; the most powerful argument in favour of which has generally been considered the circumstance of the increased education and refinement of our congregations generally, which calls for a corresponding improvement on the part of our ministers, and which could only be supplied by an institution of this kind:—

"I take occasion also to remind you, that with the altered circumstances of the world and the church, there is a change in your own condition from that of your predecessors; and a change highly favourable to the increased cultivation of your minds. Time was when Methodist preachers had few aids or opportunities for intellectual improvement. A half century ago we were peculiarly itinerant preachers, incessantly travelling from place to place. Our circuits were wide and extensive. Much of the most valuable part of the day was spent on horseback. We had few books, and little time for reading them; while among the people there was comparatively little demand for literary or intellectual accomplishment. The scene is now happily changed. We have time and opportunities for making that improvement which is so imperatively required of us. The same resources as to general knowledge are open to you, in common with the people of your charge, while your facilities for theological improvement are superior to theirs. There is a meaning in that arrangement of Providence which has left you less occupied than your fathers; and God, by thus accommodating your circumstances to your duties, renders those duties imperative upon you in a very high and extraordinary degree."

## ADDRESS TO THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS OF ENGLAND.

*Containing Remarks on the Causes of the Present Differences existing in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion.*

BY R. B. GRINDROD.

(Continued from No. 3, page 40.)

"It is only corruption that stands in need of bribery; and it is imposition alone that affects mystery. It is, therefore, so far from being wrong to interfere in such matters, that it is your duty, as far as you can,—for the sake of yourselves, your posterity, and your oppressed fellow-subjects,—to acquaint yourselves with the laws of your country."—*Bradburn on the Slave Trade.*

How applicable are these words of Samuel Bradburn to the Methodists of England at this important crisis!

"Is it not the duty of every individual who wishes well to the prosperity of Zion to use all his exertions to rectify the judgments of his misinformed brethren?—to expose the truth, the naked truth, to their view, that their tranquillity may not be again ruffled by the clamours of ignorance or the blasts of malevolence?"—*Letter from the Local Preachers, &c. Leeds, Jan. 1795.*

"As truth never prevailed without opposition, and as the major part of our dear fathers and brethren have raised ramparts round its sacred temple, let not all the volleys of sophistry, nor the fraternal tones of unyielding obstinacy, divert your attention from the momentous object, which alone can give permanency to your independency, and establishment to liberty and truth."—*Newark Leaders, &c.*

"Methodism," as certain of the London preachers have so ably expressed it, "arose amidst the extraordinary interpositions of Divine Providence and grace;" and in that age of darkness and religious indifference "it was admirably adapted to the propagation and maintenance of gospel truth and blessings." Mr. Wesley, whose name will be hallowed in the hearts of men so long as this world shall exist, was the principal agent in the hands of God of promoting the glorious reformation. Situated as he was under the most peculiar circumstances—opposers of all kinds being around him, and contumely and reproach being heaped upon him, it is astonishing that, amidst all the trials which he had to encounter, he should preserve that placid fortitude and determined perseverance which terminated in so gratifying a reward. But God was with him in all his trials, and to God, at all times, he applied for guidance and support.

Having in numerous instances done great good in the course of his travels, Mr. Wesley relates, in the published account of our Rules, the manner in which the societies first originated. At an early period three lay preachers offered their services "to serve him as sons in the gospel, and to labour when and where he might direct." This event was probably about the year 1740. In July of the same year he separated from the Moravians, with whom he had associated, and with whom he differed on some points of faith. Mr. Wesley had then, as he himself expresses it, some assistants in the field of labour:—"About twenty-five of our brethren God has given us already, all of whom think and speak the same thing. Seven or eight and forty, likewise, of the fifty women that were in the band, desire to cast in their lot with us." In 1742, the societies greatly increased, and were divided into classes, who were committed to the spiritual care of a leader. The establishment of classes originated in a purely temporal meeting. Mr. Wesley observes, "that many were met together at Bristol to consult concerning a proper method of paying the public debt contracted by building." And at this meeting it was agreed that the Society should be divided into classes, each member of which should pay one penny per week; and one person in each class be appointed to receive the money and transmit it to the stewards. "Thus began," says Mr. Wesley, "that excellent institution, merely upon a temporal account, from which we reaped so many spiritual blessings, that we soon fixed the same rule in all our societies." In the year 1743 the rules of the Society were first published, and the particular directions for the leaders specified.

The labours of Mr. Wesley and his brother, together with his "helpers," prospered very greatly; and in June, 1744, the first Conference was held in London. "Mr. Wesley invited the persons who attended, and also presided amongst them. There were six clergymen and four travelling preachers present.\* The Minutes of

\* Myles's Chronological History of the People called Methodists. P. 24.



this Conference were written down in the form of conversations, and the first questions asked were the following :—

Q.—Shall any of our lay brethren be present at this Conference?

A.—We agree to invite, from time to time, such as we think proper.

Q.—Which of them shall we invite to-day?

A.—The four mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.\* Who were accordingly brought in.

In order to make these questions intelligible to the general reader, it will be necessary to state that the ministers present were clergymen of the Church of England, and who, consequently, had not hitherto been accustomed in church matters to associate with laymen. Their names were, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Rector of Wenwo; Henry Piers, Vicar of Bexley; Samuel Taylor, Vicar of Quinton; and John Meriton. At this period, and for some time afterwards, laymen were admitted into the Conference, and, most probably, took some part in the proceedings.

Mr. Wesley's introduction to the Conference and subsequent proceedings, admirably illustrate the spirit of piety and of genuine religious liberty which animated the primitive meetings of the Conference. He says that,—“It is desired that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that we meet with a single eye, and, as little children, who have every thing to learn; that every point which is proposed may be examined to the foundation;—that every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart; and that every question which may arise should be thoroughly debated and settled.”

Q.—Need we be fearful of doing this? What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?

A.—If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine whether it be of God.

Q.—How may the time of this Conference be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

A.—1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us.

2. In the intermediate hours let us visit none but the sick, and spend all the time that remains in retirement.

3. Let us therein give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing upon this our labour.

Q.—How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

A.—In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced. In every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

Q.—Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man, or any number of men upon earth?

A.—It is undeniably certain he cannot; either to *bishop, convocation, or general council*; and this is that grand principle of private judgment on which all the Reformers proceeded. “Every man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account of himself to God.”

Mr. Myles remarks, on the latter part of these observations,—“It is impossible to read this without admiring it. Let it never be forgotten that these principles formed the basis of the Methodist Conference.” My readers will, I have no doubt, respond in hearty accordance with this remark; and the only source of grief arises from the subsequent deviation of the Conference (after the death of Mr. Wesley) from the Christian and enlightened principles with which it commenced operations.

In August, 1745, the second Conference was held in Bristol. There were present three clergymen and seven travelling preachers. At this Conference it was asked,

Q.—Is Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Independent church government most agreeable to reason?

As the answer to this question is important, inasmuch as it shows the views of Mr. Wesley at that time, it may be worth while, for my readers' information, to transcribe it at full.

A.—The plain origin of church government seems to be this: Christ sends forth a person to preach the Gospel, some of those who hear him repent and believe in Christ; they then desire him to watch over them, to build them up in faith, and to instruct them in the way of holiness. Here then is an independent congregation, subject to no pastor but their own, neither liable to be controlled in things spiritual by any other man or body of men whatsoever. But soon after, some persons from other parts, who were occasionally present whilst he was speaking in the Lord, beseech him to come over and help them also. He complies, yet not till he confers with the wisest and holiest of his congregation, and, *with their consent*, appoints some who have gifts and grace to

\* “The names of the preachers were, Thomas Maxfield, Jno. Downs, Thomas Richards, and Jno. Bennett.”—Myles, page 24.

watch over his flock in his absence. If it shall please God to raise a new flock, in a new place, before he leaves them he does the same thing, appointing one whom God hath fitted for the work to watch over these souls also. In like manner, in every place, where it pleased God to gather a little flock, by his word, he appoints one in his absence to take the oversight of the rest, to assist them as of the ability which God giveth. These are deacons or servants of the church, and they look upon their first pastor as the common father of all these congregations, and regard him in the same light, and esteem him still as the shepherd of their souls. These congregations are not strictly independent, as they depend upon one pastor, though not upon each other. As these congregations increase, and the deacons grow in years and grace, they will need other subordinate deacons or helpers, in respect of whom they may be called presbyters or elders, as their father in the Lord may be called the bishop or overseer of them all.

The third Conference was also held at Bristol. One of the questions asked was,

Q.—Who are the proper persons to be present at any Conference?

A.—As many of the preachers as conveniently can, the most lively and the most sensible of the band leaders where the Conference is held, and any pious, judicious strangers who may be at that place.

Mr. Myles says, that “The band leaders and strangers were only admitted as spectators; as their numbers increased prodigiously, it was found impracticable to admit them all: so that in a few years none were permitted to attend but the travelling preachers.”

Upon this subject I must beg to make a few observations. According to the reason alleged by Mr. Myles, for such a practice being discontinued, it was done so as a matter of *expediency*, and not claimed as a *right*. Mr. Wesley, in thus inviting laymen to be present, was actuated, no doubt, by what he knew to be Scriptural in its authority; and with that openness and impartiality which, in general, prompted him in all his actions. The people, also, did not find it necessary to request admission into Conference, because during Mr. Wesley’s life he acted as the acknowledged arbiter between the preachers and people. The preachers are in the Minute alluded to mentioned synonymously with the band leaders, and the inference, decidedly, is not so exclusive as Mr. Myles would make it, namely “The band leaders and strangers were only admitted as spectators.”—This distinction of Mr. Myles is a pure fiction of his own, not warranted either by the expression or context of the authorized declaration. I shall not designate this interpolation of Mr. Myles as “a pious fraud,” but leave his own party to characterize it. The cause I support requires not the aid of hard words, or opprobrious appellations.

The kingdom was, about this time, divided into seven circuits, which were very extensive and also very laborious for the preachers,—they having to travel twenty, thirty, and sometimes forty miles, and to preach twice, and sometimes thrice, each day. “Their labours in the ministry were astonishing; they alarmed the nation, and roused the regular clergy to jealousy. Some of the Methodists, and some of the junior preachers have not honoured the memory of these men as they ought; they have represented them as weak and ignorant preachers; but they were great men, possessed of a noble spirit, and ardently devoted to God. They were instrumental in draining the bogs, clearing the woods, repairing the roads, and building the bridges, by which the present race of preachers can travel their circuits comfortably. It is true their labours were so great that many of them were forced to decline them for want of health. But this circumstance proves their greatness of mind;—they returned contentedly to their trades and callings, in order to provide themselves the necessaries of life, for there were no funds of any kind among the Methodists at this time whereby a brother in distress might be relieved.” Mr. Wesley used then to say to the young men who offered to serve him as sons in the Gospel, “You must expect no wealth, no honour,—but great labour, and great reproach.”

The fourth Conference was held in London. There were present five clergymen and eleven lay preachers. The fifth Conference took place in Bristol; the sixth in London; the 7th in Bristol; the eighth was also held in Bristol, 1751. Mr. Wesley remarks, “Many of our preachers came from various parts; my spirit was much bowed down among them, fearing some of them were perverted from the simplicity of the Gospel. But I was revived at the sight of John Haine, John Nelson, and those who came with them in the evening; knowing they held the truth as it is in Jesus, and did not hold it in unrighteousness.” He was, however, pleasingly disappointed, as those were also who had suggested those fears to him.\* The ninth Conference was held in Bristol; the tenth in Leeds; the eleventh in London; the twelfth in Leeds; the thirteenth in Bristol. Mr. Myles says—“The debt of the Connexion at that period (1756) was nearly £4000 for chapels. In 1771, £6958;

\* Myles, page 71.

and at present (1812) it is upwards of £100,000 in the United Kingdom. The fourteenth Conference began in London; the fifteenth in Bristol; the sixteenth in London, and the seventeenth in Bristol. Mr. Wesley having been detained in Ireland by contrary winds, observes, on his arriving at Bristol, "I spent the two following days with the preachers, who had been waiting for me all the week; and their love and unanimity were such as soon made me forget all my labour." Mr. Myles assumes that this circumstance clearly shows that there could be no Methodist Conference while Mr. Wesley lived, unless he were present, or had appointed the person who held it. The eighteenth Conference was held in London. At the Conference in 1763, the Deed of Trust was drawn up under Mr. Wesley's direction, by three eminent counsel, and was published and recommended to the Societies. The number of circuits was at this time thirty-one in the three kingdoms. The twenty-second Conference was held in Manchester, being the first time it had ever been held in that town. Mr. Myles observes, "From this period the Minutes of the Conference were *annually* published;" and, adds Mr. Myles, in his usual gratuitous and sweeping manner, "it appears that (except on rare occasions) only those attended them who were itinerants, and laboured in union with each other, under the superintendence of Mr. Wesley."\* The twenty-third Conference was held in Leeds, in the year of our Lord 1766. Mr. Wesley observes concerning it, "A happier one we never had, nor a more profitable one. It was both begun and ended in love, and with a solemn sense of the presence of God."

"From the Minutes of this Conference it also appears that some among the preachers, as well as the people, thought Mr. Wesley's power too great, and wished to curtail it. This led him to consider the steps by which he believed God had given him that authority. On this subject he thus speaks with his usual plainness†:—'Count Zinzendorf loved to keep all things *close*: I love to do all things openly. I will therefore tell you all I know of the matter.' Speaking of the formation of classes, Mr. Wesley says, 'It may be observed, the desire was on *their* part, not *mine*. My desire was to live and die in retirement. But I did not see that I could refuse them my help, and be guiltless before God.—Here commenced my power, viz. a power to appoint *when* and *where*, and *how* they should meet; and to remove those whose lives showed that they had not a desire to flee from the wrath to come. And this power remained the same whether the people meeting together were twelve, or twelve hundred, or twelve thousand.'"

In the same manner, with respect to stewards, "In a few days some of them said, 'Sir, you want money to pay for the lease of the foundry, and likewise a large sum of money to put it in repair.' On this consideration I suffered them to subscribe, and when the Society met, I asked, 'Who will take the trouble of receiving the money, and paying it when it is needful?' One said, 'I will do it, and keep the account for you.' So here was the first steward.—Let it be remarked, it was I myself, not the people, who chose these stewards, and appointed to each the distinct work wherein he was to help me, as long as I desired; and herein I began to exercise another sort of power, namely, that of *appointing* and *removing* stewards."

With respect to several young men proffering their services as sons in the Gospel, Mr. Wesley observes, "These severally desired to serve me as sons, and to labour *when* and *where* I should direct. Observe, these likewise desired *me*, not I them. But I dare not refuse their assistance; and here commenced my power to appoint each of these, *when* and *where*, and *how* to labour; that is, while he choosed to continue with me; for each had a power to go away when he pleased, as I had also to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause. The case continued the same when the number of preachers increased: I had just the same power, still, to appoint *when* and *where*, and *how* each should help me, and to tell any (if I saw cause) 'I do not desire your help any longer.'"

With respect to preachers, Mr. Wesley says, "When their numbers increased, so that it was inconvenient to invite them all, for several years I wrote to those with whom I desired to confer, and they only met me at London, or elsewhere,—till, at length, I gave a general permission. Observe, I myself sent for these of my own free choice, and I sent for them to *advise*, not *govern* me. Neither did I at any time divest myself of any part of the power above described; which the providence of God had cast upon me, without any design or choice of mine: and as it was merely in obedience to the providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I at first accepted this power, so it is on the same consideration, not for profit, honour, or pleasure, that I use it at this day."

\* Myles, page 105.

† Myles, page 109.

At the Conference, in 1784, after he had made the Deed of Declaration, he published in the Minutes of that year, "No power which I ever enjoyed is given up by the Declaration Deed. No such thing could have been supposed, had it not been for that improper and ambiguous word *life estate*. This, also, has given the grand occasion of offence to them that sought occasion."<sup>\*</sup>

In Coke and Moore's *Life of Wesley* we find the following remarks on the love of power by Mr. Wesley,—“It is certain he always denied it, and that in the most solemn manner. Answering for himself, when thus accused several years ago, he observes, ‘And as it was merely in obedience to the providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I at first accepted this power, which I never sought,—nay, a hundred times laboured to throw off; so it is on the same considerations, not for profit, honour, or pleasure, that I use it at this day:—but several gentlemen are offended at my having *so much* power; my answer to them is this, I did not *seek* any part of this power; it came upon me unawares: but when it was come, not daring to bury that talent, I used it to the best of my judgment. Yet I was never fond of it. I always did, and do now bear it as a burden which God lays upon me, and, therefore, I dare not yet lay it down.’”

These statements of Mr. Wesley decisively prove that, although he undertook so laborious and responsible a station, he did it because he thought the Connexion would be thereby benefited, and because it was by consent of the people, and at their especial request. On this subject the contributor to a certain religious publication speaks thus:—“His tenderness, his fatherly affection to his people, and watchful care over their interests, were strongly marked through the whole tenor of his conduct. His ears were always open to the complaints of every one, whether they were made against preachers, stewards, class leaders, or wealthy members of the Society, and, in most cases, the injured person was sure to have redress; the people in general considered his government as the best security of their most valuable privileges, and as a source of many comforts. There were, however, some things in Mr. Wesley's government which ought to be deemed radical evils. They have already had, and still continue to have, the most pernicious influence on the minds of the preachers; and whatever injures or weakens the integrity, the simplicity, and the piety of the preachers, must be eventually injurious to the people! One thing alluded to was, his assuming the charge and direction of the *temporal affairs* of the societies. This was not within the sphere of his office, as a minister of the Gospel. To condemn it altogether, it is sufficient to say that the apostles refused this charge; and it is contrary to the practice of the first Christian ministers. And though he did not take this charge upon him from a principle of covetousness, yet, we are persuaded, his usefulness to the people was obstructed by it. On many occasions, temporal affairs have occupied so much of his time, and so deeply engaged his attentions, that he has not unfrequently gone into the pulpit in a state of mind neither comfortable to himself nor profitable to the congregation. These effects have been much greater on the minds of the preachers in general, who have neither Mr. Wesley's wisdom, his long habits of close reflection, his disinterested charity, nor his firmness of mind.”

“August 18, 1767, the twenty-fourth Conference was held in London. Mr. Wesley's account of it is, ‘I met in Conference with assistants, and a select number of our preachers. To these were added Mr. Whitfield, Howell Harris; and many stewards and local preachers *on the last two days*. Love and harmony reigned from the beginning to the end.’”<sup>†</sup>

The words in italics are found in Mr. Myles's “History;” and he evidently wishes his readers to mark the period and length of time those lay individuals were admitted into Conference. Admitting that this was the last time *such a right was distinctly authorized, and which I am much inclined to doubt, it appears from Mr. Myles's statement that Conference was open to laymen for at least twenty-one years.*

In order to show the accuracy of Mr. Myles's extract, I will transcribe the passage as it stands in Mr. Wesley's Journal:—

“1767. Tuesday, 18. I met in Conference with our assistants, and a select number of our preachers. To these were added, on Thursday and Friday, Mr. Whitfield, Howell Harris, and many stewards and local preachers. Love and harmony reigned from the beginning to the end.”  
—*Mr. Wesley's Works*, vol. iv. page 326.

I will leave my readers to pass their own judgment on this singular change of phraseology, without any comment, except remarking that Mr. Myles's accuracy, in this respect, as well as his observation on the passage before quoted, cannot be relied upon as an unimpeachable standard.

<sup>\*</sup> Myles, page 3.

<sup>†</sup> Myles, page 120.



## CASE OF MR. COX, OF CARLISLE.

EXTRAORDINARY PROCEEDINGS AT A LEADERS' MEETING HELD IN THE  
WESLEYAN METHODIST CHAPEL, CARLISLE, JANUARY 19, 1835.

THE REV. THOMAS DUNN, IN THE CHAIR.

"The members of our Societies are delivered from every apprehension of clandestine expulsion, as that superintendent would be bold, indeed, who would act with partiality or injustice in the presence of the whole meeting of leaders. Such a superintendent, we trust, we have not among us."—*Minutes*, 1797.

"The privileges of our people are as sacred to us as the rights of the ministerial office, and that it is our determination faithfully to uphold both the one and the other in their mutual and corresponding relations."—*Declaration of Preachers*, 1835.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Permit me, as a practical illustration of the truth of the above declarations, to lay before your readers the following *disgraceful* and *outrageous* proceedings which took place at the leaders' meeting, held in the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Fisher-street, Carlisle, on the 19th instant; the Rev. Thomas Dunn in the chair.

Mr. Cox, a leader and local preacher, having been previously served with a notice from Mr. Dunn, to stand his trial that evening, and this having got abroad, a considerable number of the society got into the chapel,—for the gas-lights being extinguished, and only two candles placed in the pews where the leaders were assembled, the rest of the chapel was enveloped in darkness, and under its cover the assembled members of society could see, but not be seen, and thus with myself were both eye and ear witnesses of the proceedings.

Mr. Dunn commenced in the usual way by expressing the *pain he felt* at being thus obliged to perform the most painful part of his duty; he had furnished Mr. Cox with a notice of the charges to be brought against him, in a letter, of which the following is a copy:

"SIR,—It is my most painful but unavoidable duty to inform you that I shall have to charge you, next Monday evening, the 19th instant, at the leaders' meeting, with,—1. Writing letters, calling upon our members in different circuits to oppose the Conference, and to support an illegal Association;—2. Bringing forward and moving, at the late quarterly meeting, a series of anti-Methodistical resolutions, subversive of the very existence of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, against the repeated warnings and protestations of myself as superintendent of the circuit;—3. And with attempting to wrest the chair of the quarterly meeting from its proper official occupant, and that against the repeated warnings and remonstrances of myself as superintendent of the circuit.—I am, &c.

THOS. DUNN.

"To Bro. T. J. Cox."

He then produced two papers, which he said were letters written by Mr. Cox; but instead of laying them before the meeting he merely proceeded to read and comment on them, asserting that one of them had been admitted to have been written by Mr. Cox, at a previous leaders' meeting, and demanded if it was now denied. To this Mr. Cox replied,—"Go on, Sir, with your charges, and when you have finished I will make my defence." He then asserted that the other letter had been admitted by Mr. Cox to have been written by him, at a private interview which he had with him,\* and added, "I believe you will all trust in my word." Having thus despatched the letters, he was proceeding to the second charge, when Mr. John Lowthian, of Carlton House, the circuit steward, (the person whose gray hairs Mr. Dunn so grossly insulted at the late quarterly meeting,) rose, and said it was useless to proceed in that manner to arraign Brother Cox,—for if he was guilty, they were all guilty, and to save time Mr. Dunn had better arraign all the brethren. Mr. Dunn turned to him, with haughtiness of manner and language, and said, "I will take my pleasure, Sir, whom I arraign." He now read the second charge, and without ever producing a single rule which the second charge had violated, or asking the brethren if Mr. Cox was or was not guilty,—without proceeding to the third charge, or permitting Mr. Cox to say a single word in his defence, he instantly, to the astonishment of the meeting, pronounced the sentence of expulsion. Cries of "Shame, shame," resounded from every part of the meeting, and so great was the indignation excited by such arbitrary and unjust proceedings, that a scene of clamour and confusion ensued. "He is a member," "He is a leader," "We receive him as such," exclaimed many of the brethren. For nearly two hours Mr. Dunn kept on incessantly speaking, so that when any one wanted to be heard he was forced to interrupt Mr. Dunn, and fairly talk him down; but as soon as Mr. Dunn recovered a little strength he again clamoured the speaker down; and this disgraceful behaviour characterized the whole of Mr. Dunn's proceedings during the evening.

As soon as Mr. Cox could make himself heard, he demanded to be tried as a leader. He read the rule, which enjoins that no leader shall be removed from his office but in conjunction with a leaders' meeting, and protested against the present mode of trial. "You are a member," exclaimed Mr. Dunn. "I am also a leader," replied Mr. Cox, and by my peers

\* This was a false statement. At the interview referred to, Mr. Dunn, who sat opposite to Mr. Cox, and about two yards from him, opened a drawer, took out a paper, and read the following sentence:—"Our quietness is their security." "Now," said he, "did you not write this?" "That," replied Mr. Cox, "is a quotation from a printed work. I have written many letters, and possibly may have quoted that sentence in some of them." The paper which Mr. Dunn held in his hand was not shown to Mr. Cox, and no more passed on that subject. Again, Mr. Dunn affirmed that Mr. Cox said he was determined to agitate. This is also false; Mr. Cox never used such an expression. He said, "He had taken his position prayerfully, and, with the help of God, was determined to maintain it."

I demand to be tried. I cast myself upon you, my brethren, and by your decision I stand or fall." "We will support you," was the cry of the meeting. Mr. Cox appeared deeply to feel the shameful conduct of Mr. Dunn, and said, after thanking his brethren for their support, "Is it not intolerable that after spending our years, our labours, our money in the cause, that the very men, raised by us from the bench, from mechanical employ, made into ministers, and supported as gentlemen, should thus act towards us?" Upon this Mr. Dunn started up and vociferated, at the highest pitch of his voice, "I will not be slandered,—I will not be calumniated," and completely silenced Mr. Cox by his clamour. A leader and trustee present cried out, "This is downright Popery!" Another, filled with indignation, exclaimed, "If any man will support such proceedings in Mr. Dunn, he must be a villain!" So great was the noise, that one leader said, "The police will be coming in!" Mr. Isaac James, as soon as he could be heard, condemned Mr. Dunn's conduct. "Mr. Cox, he said, had a right to be tried as a leader. To this Mr. Dunn would not consent. He read the rule that forbids writing letters, &c.: as a member he tried him, and by that rule expelled him. Mr. Routledge, circuit steward, begged leave to read the rule and the late Mr. Bridgman's comment upon it; but Mr. Dunn would not permit him. Mr. Cox again attempted to speak and defend his conduct. He stated that the rule of 1796, by which Mr. Dunn condemned him, was not binding, it having been explained away by the Conference in 1797; and (he continued) the people, in defiance of that very rule, met together in 1796, and held what Conference now calls illegal meetings, and from those very meetings delegates were sent to meet the Conference in 1797; and did the Conference treat them as illegal? No; it treated with them; and these very delegates wrung further concessions from an unwilling Conference." "I will not permit Conference to be reflected on!" exclaimed Mr. Dunn, and by his strength of voice again silenced Mr. Cox. Upon this, Mr. Joseph Morgan asked Mr. Dunn, "Why, since he was so very tenacious of his honour as chairman, he could not permit Mr. Cox to be tenacious of his right as a leader?" "I will not stand here to be questioned," cried out Mr. Dunn, with great vehemence. Mr. Cox turned to him, and said, "Be calm, Sir, be calm; such excitement in you is disgraceful." In the midst of the noise, Mr. Edward James (his only supporter) rose up, and said, "I am the villain (alluding to an observation before made): I will support Mr. Dunn: I will stand by him," and almost immediately after left the meeting. Several of the brethren said that Brother Cox was condemned before Mr. Dunn came to the meeting; it was mere mockery to pretend to try him at it. In the midst of noise and confusion, Mr. Dunn again pronounced the sentence of expulsion, and then *dared* to desecrate the name of the holy and blessed Trinity, in pronouncing the benediction, and declared the meeting closed. Mr. Shaw, of Cummersdale, condemned the conduct of Mr. Dunn, and told him to come no more to Cummersdale, for they would receive him no longer as a preacher. Mr. Lowthian gave him notice not to attend any longer at Cumwhinton, for the chapel door would be closed against him. Since the meeting a third place has given him notice not to attend; and at a fourth place, Dalston, they have declared that not one will hear him preach; and in Carlisle very many have determined not to hear him any more. Thus is a man, sent to minister in holy things, to preach the Gospel of peace, scattering, by his conduct, firebrands, arrows, and death, and, reckless of consequences, is determined to sacrifice all but his *beloved authority*. So great was the excitement among the *eye and ear witnesses*, that one person, a member of Mr. Cox's class, could scarcely be restrained, and had to be withheld, from going up to Mr. Dunn in the midst of the leaders, and confronting him to his face.

Since the meeting the following protest has been handed to Mr. Dunn, having first received the signatures of twenty-four leaders, who were present at the meeting, being the whole number of leaders present excepting Mr. Edw. James.

"We, the undersigned, being leaders and stewards of the Carlisle Wesleyan Methodist Society, having had submitted to us, in full meeting, certain charges preferred against our esteemed brother, Thos. Cox, a local preacher, and a member of this meeting, upon which charges our said brother was, by the Rev. Thos. Dunn, declared to be expelled from office, and from the Methodist Society, and, having attentively considered the said charges, do hereby declare them not proven.

"We therefore enter this our solemn protest against the whole proceedings in the trial of our said brother, as being anti-Methodistical, unconstitutional, and unjust, and declare that we consider the expulsion of our brother, Thos. Cox as ineffectual, null, and void, and that he is, notwithstanding thereof, a member of the Methodist Society, and of this leaders' meeting.

John Carrick,	Isaac James,	Jas. Nicholson,	Wm. Dawson,	Wm. Armstrong,	Wm. Bird,
Thos. Barnes,	Thos. Robson,	Hy. Whiteley,	Robt. Muras,	John Sanderson,	John Gash,
Edw. Harrison,	Wm. Cape,	John Turner,	Jos. Lacey,	Thos. Hillary,	Jos. Morgan,
Edw. Routledge,	Wm. Jones,	C. Hetherington,	John Sewell,	Robt. Metcalfe,	Jno. Lowthain,

Although this account is already extended to too great a length, yet allow me an observation or two. That cause must be weak indeed that needs the support afforded by such unjust and unrighteous proceedings. It was certainly an enviable time for Mr. Cox, the leaders pressing around him to offer their hands. But how low—how degraded—appeared Mr. Dunn, in the midst of the official members of his church;—alone—unsupported by a single person—perfectly exhausted by his excitement—and sunk in the estimation of every person who had witnessed his improper conduct! But why expose these things to the world? Why draw aside the veil, and expose to the sneers of the infidel such proceedings? Why?—Because a dread of exposure may deter some, who can be restrained by no other motive; and such shameless acts of *petty* tyranny ought not to be covered with the mantle of a false charity.

I pledge myself for the truth of the above statements, and therefore send my name and address.

I am, yours, &c.

AN EYE AND EAR WITNESS.

## PROCEEDINGS AT MANCHESTER.

The subject of Methodist reform is gaining increased interest in consequence of the late tyrannical proceedings of Messrs. Anderson and Co., who, as if desirous of adding to their disgraceful notoriety, have again been at the work of expulsion. Since the last published account, a well known pious leader has been expelled by Mr. Anderson, in consequence of having addressed the people at a public meeting of the Association. It is very probable that an account of that proceeding will shortly be laid before the public. Its features are, if my report be correct, very similar to those witnessed at the expulsion of Mr. Greenhalgh, but with this exception, that the so-called Rev. Attorney-General did not impiously profane the name of the Holy Trinity as he had done in the case alluded to. Speaking of Mr. Greenhalgh, I may mention that the preachers have been extending their cruelty towards him by obtaining his expulsion as conductor of a Sunday school. The latter circumstance is likely to terminate very seriously, as the teachers, &c. are determined not to submit to this arbitrary conduct.

I had almost forgotten to mention that, on sentence of expulsion being pronounced upon Mr. Hughes, five or six leaders immediately gave in their class books, so disgusted and indignant did they feel at the conduct of Mr. Anderson. In fact, it was like the preceding trials,—a complete mockery of justice.

How applicable are the words of an eloquent writer to the affairs of Methodism at this important crisis:—"The preachers should beware of neglecting or despising us (the people.) For if they once lose their interest in us, as they certainly will, if they are at no pains to preserve it, I would fain know what must become either of them or us. As for us, I fear many would grow indifferent to all religion, and seldom appear in our chapels, or in any other place of worship; others, of a warmer and more resolute temper, would find out ways of making the preachers uneasy; and, if they could not get rid of them any other way, would draw off to other parties, or form new societies, and find out preachers agreeable to their own taste, who might think it prudent to keep alive their discontent with those they had left. *Thus our common interests as Methodists would moulder and crumble away by our divisions and animosities; and the preachers, who, by their lordly conduct towards the people, have been the occasions of these divisions, will have the great pleasure of being entertained by the echo of their own voices, and the delivery of their discourses, in empty places, or amidst a little circle of ignorant friends, till perhaps they are at length STARVED INTO A GOOD OPINION OF COMPLIANCE,—and, in the meantime, will have the honour of ruining the cause they undertook to support.*" Have not all the persecutions, martyrdoms, and divisions which have disgraced and destroyed the Christian church been occasioned by this single evil, namely, assuming an authority to judge for another, and to force him, not by arguments, but by violence, as far as power can go, to profess a creed he did not believe, or to submit to a discipline he did not approve? I am dissatisfied with the authority exercised over me, not because I disrespect the persons of our preachers, (God is my witness, I love them above any body of men whatever,)—least of all, from unwillingness to yield subjection where I apprehend Christ has enjoined it, for, so far as I know my heart, it would be my joy to bow with all humility to any authority delegated by him; but my unwillingness to yield unlimited obedience is founded on this,—that I assuredly believe the contrary to what the discipline of our Societies, as now explained, requires me to believe as true. I therefore choose rather to state my sentiments openly and plainly, than hypocritically to say I approve what I cannot, although, at present, I see no choice but that of submission or separation; yet I hope the good sense of our people will lead them to unite together as one body to obtain their just rights, more especially as the preachers have publicly declared themselves *eminently one body*,—(see Minutes, page 29,)—apparently in contradistinction from us, *the people*. This declaration, I suppose, is the work of a few leading men,—for I cannot think that, in general, the preachers approve of it, or of every part of our constitution. Come forward, friends, in this good cause: let us all have one purse. I believe it must be the case literally,—for, as the preachers have declared in the Minutes that they are *eminently one body*, let us learn wisdom from them, and prove that, if they thus discard and despise, we will join together, and show ourselves *eminently one body*, in which every member feels for and strengthens the other; so that none, no not the head, may say to the feet, "I have no need of you."

On Monday evening last, five or six leaders were expelled in the Bridgewater-street Circuit. Their so-called trial was, I believe, nearly similar to those already published; exhibiting the same recklessness of Christian feeling, and the same disregard of the laws of Conference.

A most extraordinary scene took place at the Missionary Tea Party, held on Friday last, in Lever-street, Manchester. On Mr. Prest, one of the Salford preachers, making some remark as to the divided state of the Society, the Rev. Jonathan Barker, an old and respected minister, emphatically said aloud, "You should attempt to piece it, then!"—or something to that effect. Mr. Barker was immediately cried down, and, on requesting liberty, in due course of time, to explain his reasons for making such an observation, was denied so reasonable a request. Mr. Barker, it is well known, is exceedingly grieved at the outrageous conduct of Mr. Anderson and his colleagues in the late proceedings; but now, like other individuals similarly situated, he must submit to be accused of being in his dotage, a vile innovator, a low radical, and other scurrilous appellations. These proceedings, and others of a similar nature, which have recently occurred, shall, ere long, be submitted to public judgment.

Dr. Warren arrived in Manchester late last week, and, on his arrival being known, received the congratulations of his numerous and increasing friends. On the following Sabbath, he preached two very excellent and impressive discourses; and many will have cause to bless God for the spiritual benefit they that day received. After the evening service, a most animated prayer meeting was held, and soon a song of praise had to be sung at the joyous acknowledgment of one converted soul. Praise God. At the new rooms lately opened in various parts of the town, the same feeling is exhibited. Here they meet together to worship the Most High in harmony and peace, uninterrupted by priestly constraint. The congregations are already very numerous, and the regular chapels are *very thinly* attended.

I may here mention, for the information of those who may be unaware of our local occurrences, that the rooms opened for public worship have been opened with the *full determination* of adhering to our first principles, namely, that of continuing with, and reforming the old body. I mention this lest it might be supposed, by individuals unacquainted with our local affairs, that we were intending to separate. If such a report has got into circulation, *I can positively affirm it to be groundless*. The state of persecution to which we are continually exposed, and the numbers who were daily leaving us, and going over to other connexions, fully justified, I think, this arrangement. Several of our leaders, who "might have been retained had this step been adopted sooner during this important struggle, are now entirely lost to us." But circumstances have now given us the advantage, and we shall be enabled to preserve our leaders and people until the mighty and desired reform shall be accomplished.

It is agreed on all hands that the prospects of the Association were never in a more encouraging state. The Methodists of Manchester have never been so determined to persevere in the good cause as they are at present.

The law affair, by which Dr. Warren demands the restitution of his rights, has given a mighty impulse to the cause in this quarter, and expectation is doubly raised as to the result. Of this the first legal authorities have, I believe, expressed themselves in positive terms.

In conclusion, I must beg of your numerous readers to use their utmost exertions to aid us in this mighty struggle, by forwarding subscriptions, &c. to the legal fund, in order that the provisional committee may be assisted in their operations. It must be well known that a legal undertaking, like the one I have mentioned, cannot be commenced and carried on without considerable expense; and to whom have we to appeal but to the friends of genuine religious liberty? The prompt forwarding of any sums which may be collected for this purpose will be, I have no doubt, particularly acceptable.

With promise of another early communication, I beg to subscribe myself,  
Manchester, Jan. 29, 1835.

A FRIEND OF GENUINE METHODISM.

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The following letter was last week sent to the Rev. Calverley Riley, supernumerary preacher in the Liverpool North Circuit, by thirteen members of his class. We recommend it to the notice of our readers for the mild and Christian, yet firm and uncompromising spirit which it breathes.

#### TO THE REV. CALVERLEY RILEY.

Class Room, 26th January, 1835.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—It is with feelings of sorrow that we are necessitated to make this communication to you; but the situation in which you necessarily stand, as our class leader, representing us and our opinions in the Connexion, and as the medium by which our contributions are conveyed to the funds of Conference, obliges us, notwithstanding the personal respect and esteem we have hitherto entertained for you, to break the tie which has, up to the present, subsisted between us, and that for the following reasons:—

The events which have recently taken place, at different chapels in the Liverpool



circuits, whereby several leaders and members have been expelled the Methodist Society; privileged meetings withheld or denied; and charitable collections refused coupled with prior conduct on the part of Conference, which deeply wounded the minds of a vast number of members in Society, and shook the confidence which should be reposed in that body, have evinced, in our opinion, a total want, or wilful disregard, of the principles of true piety in those whom, as our teachers, we naturally expect to find eminently abounding in the several graces which should adorn the Christian character.

The expulsion of those leaders and members, some of them, after very many years labours in, and contributions to, the cause of Christ, not for immorality, but on the plea of an infringement of Methodistic law, which law was either abrogated, or, at best, doubtful (and thus entitling the parties on trial to the benefit of that doubt) together with the whole of the circumstances attending those cases,—have forced the lamentable conviction on our minds, that an irresponsible and dangerous power has grown out of the originally mild and peaceful institutions of Methodism, which never could have been contemplated by its venerable founder;—a power which, as it now exists, is inimical to the rights of the great body of the Connexion, inasmuch as the constitution of their several local meetings (or courts) no longer affords the individual a security against injustice, or a means of obtaining redress; but is become an engine in the hands of interested parties, with the most powerful temptations to wield it, for the suppression of complaint, the baffling of inquiry, and total ejection of remonstrance;—a power which, as recently exercised, is subversive of the great basis of civilized society,—the right of private judgment, and by substituting law for justice, renders the people the mere property of Conference, and their contributions the means of extending, augmenting, and rivetting an evil upon themselves and future members, until the true spirit of piety and Christian love be overcome and lost in the lust of worldly ambition.

As members of a section of the Church of Christ, united in fellowship on principles which we do and must with our latest breath admire and love, we are not unmindful that we possess also rights as members of a civil community; and that so far from our Methodistical membership cancelling any one of those rights, we feel convinced that the free and conscientious discharge of all our civil privileges is the surest support that man has to offer to the church to which he belongs; and not only so, but in the same free and conscientious manner it becomes our bounden duty, as we shall answer it hereafter, at all times, as far as in us lies, to use those civil rights in the fear of God to correct abuses, withstand transgressions, and restore our beloved church to its original purity, simplicity, and singleness of purpose.

Such, dear Sir, being our sentiments, and believing that the time is now arrived when a means may, under God, be adopted for remedying the evils which have grown up and established themselves to the great detriment of Methodism, we do indeed deplore the necessity which obliges us to withdraw ourselves from your class. But, at the same time, we will not allow it to be considered that our opinions can be represented by any one so closely connected, and, therefore, in a measure identified with the public conduct of our preachers; nor can we consistently continue to support by our contributions, measures which we conscientiously disapprove. We cannot suffer our conduct to belie our sentiments, nor do we wish to add to that measure of injustice which already lies at the door of those who have already expelled from the Church some of its most efficient members, for an exercise of private opinion: we therefore beg that our names may be erased from your class book.

Wishing you all the peace and happiness which can be derived from a union and communion with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we subscribe ourselves,

Your affectionate Brothers and Sisters,

RALPH BURROWS,  
MARY ANN DRYHURST,  
JOHN PRITCHARD,  
THOMAS ROBINSON,  
ELIZABETH BROWN,

HANNAH BROOKS,  
THOMAS MIDDLEBROOK,  
GEORGE WILLIAMS,  
ANNE BEATTIE WILLIAMS,  
JAMES TAYLOR.

JANE HARPER,  
DAVID QUAIL,  
WILLIAM QUAIL,

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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We expect to insert in our next number a reply to Mr. VEVERS's second appeal.


The Todmorden and Sheerness cases shall be inserted next week.

The controversy between the Rev. John Maclean and the Rev. Thos. Allin, of Sheffield, which has given rise to one of the clearest and most lucid expositions of the present system of Methodism which we have for some time seen, shall not be lost sight of.

Since our last we have received communications from Winchester, Carlisle, Manchester, London, and several friends in Liverpool.

We have to apologize to T. N., of Oldham, for the notice in our last respecting the non-payment of the postage of his letter. It was a mistake, which has since been corrected. We received on Monday, last, Feb. 2nd, a letter from Northwich, dated January 28th. Of course, it was too late to comply with the request of our correspondent.

The Sheffield parcel has arrived, and shall be attended to.

 No. 6 will be published on Wednesday next, Feb. 11.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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No. 6.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 11, 1835.

Price 1½d.

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## THE LATE MUSIC-HALL MEETING, LIVERPOOL.

From the length to which the detailed account of the above meeting extended in No. 4 of the *Lantern*, we had no space left for any remarks of our own, which were, however, the less requisite from the full and clear exposition of the necessity for the Association, and of its objects and intentions, presented to the meeting by the several speakers on that occasion. "As every person possessed of the least discernment must have foreseen," these speeches have aroused the ire of our contemporary, whose beams *illuminate* this lower hemisphere every other week, and "the low and vulgar vituperation" of the "patriotic and liberty-loving speakers" is denounced in good set terms, as "pestiferous" and "destructive," the effusion of disappointed ambition and wounded pride. Whether these sage remarks are the production of the Reverend editor himself, or of one of his coadjutors, we have no direct evidence; we are rather inclined to think the latter, as they do not carry, *primâ facie*, the stamp of the personality for which the editor himself is so remarkable. Be this as it may, we will hazard a few cursory remarks on the arguments brought forward to prove the Association inconsistent, factious, and destructive. The charges are, however, mixed up one with another in such a way as to render it not very easy to separate them, but we will try, nevertheless, to reply to them distinctly. The first charge, then, appears to be that "the Association began their career by declaring that they desired nothing new in Methodism, and it since turns out that they do want something new." This, if true, would be a crime scarcely equal to the "sin of witchcraft," if it could be proved that something new in Methodism is required. But it is not true. The Association want nothing new in the *principles* of Methodism. They require that all ambiguity shall be removed from its laws, and that some security shall be given for their future observance on the part of the preachers. To read over the remarks in the *Illuminator*, one would suppose that the preachers were the most inoffensive and quiet of his Majesty's liege subjects, and that any breach of Methodistic law and order on their part would be a thing never to be dreamt of. The following extracts from the report read at the Music-hall will perhaps throw some light on this subject. The Association make the following complaints:—

- 1.—That the preachers have claimed the power of dismissing officers of the Society from office, without the consent of the meetings to which they belong, in direct violation of the rules of 1797; and also to pronounce sentence of expulsion from the Society, without the consent of the leaders' meeting.

2.—That the Conference, by its decision on the Leeds case, justified a Special District Meeting in taking upon itself to supersede and control the judicial authority of the leaders' meeting, and to impose tests on the leaders of an arbitrary and unauthorized character.

3.—That Special District Meetings, consisting of preachers alone, have been held, for the purpose of determining upon accusations brought against preachers, contrary to the laws of 1795, which state that no preacher shall be suspended by any district committee, without having the privilege of a trial before a tribunal consisting of trustees, stewards, and leaders, as well as preachers; and that these illegal District Meetings have, by their arbitrary proceedings, broken the peace of the Societies, and occasioned the possibility of a most serious division.

4.—That a Theological Institution for the instruction of the junior preachers has been instituted by the Conference, without consulting the Societies generally through the Quarterly meetings, as required by the laws; and have thereby evinced their utter disregard for the opinions of those by whom the institution must eventually be supported, and for whose benefit we are told it has been designed.

5.—That the superintendent preachers, as chairmen of the regular official meetings, have refused to permit such meetings to consider questions relating to Methodism in which they have felt a strong interest; and when resolutions have been proposed for adoption by such meetings, in order to their being transmitted to the Conference, the superintendents have refused to put the resolutions to the vote; thus depriving the regular meetings of their acknowledged right of respectfully addressing the Conference.

These complaints are in substance the same as those made by the London trustees, in their published declaration, and they have never yet been answered. At the Leeds meeting, notwithstanding the disgraceful uproar and outrageous clamour of the Conference party, when they were challenged to deny that the preachers had violated their own laws, not a man could be found to stand up before that assembly, and assert, on his honour and his conscience, that he believed the laws had not been broken. Even the great Mr. Scarth himself, who so valiantly threw himself into the breach in behalf of the Conference on that occasion, to the infinite amusement, if not the edification, of the audience, even he shrunk from this test.

Away, then, with all the contemptible quirks and shallow quibbles about it being Methodistically illegal for the people to meet to demand redress of grievances. The simple question is, are the facts above stated true, or are they not? If not true, let them be distinctly denied and proved false. If they are true, what other resource have the people but to associate for the purpose of obtaining justice? If the "explanatory amplifications" of the preachers are correct, the boasted laws of Methodism are something in the nature of a turnstile,—they will open wide enough in one direction to allow the Reverend Dictator to pass through, with the Theological Institution on his shoulders; but let one of the swinish multitude endeavour to force his way to lodge a complaint, and admittance is impossible. These, then, being our complaints, the following are what we demand:—

1.—A distinct disavowal of the power exercised by the Special District Meeting, in the Leeds case, of superseding and controlling the leaders' meeting, and imposing tests on its members.

2.—That no officer or leader shall be suspended or removed from office without the consent of the meeting to which he belongs, and that no member of Society shall be expelled without the consent of the leaders' meeting. We also require that the system of nomination to office by the superintendent preachers shall undergo revision.

3.—That the official meetings shall have the right of addressing the Conference on any subject they may think proper, and that if any superintendent refuse to put any motion to the vote, or dismiss the meeting, or vacate the chair, the meeting may legally appoint another chairman for the transaction of business.

4.—That the Theological Institution be immediately suspended, until the consent of the societies is obtained through the quarterly meetings, and that no new rule or regulation be adopted by the Conference, in future, without the consent of the people, ascertained in a similar manner.

5.—That the laws of 1795 and 1797 be revised by a committee of preachers and lay representatives, in order to divest them of all ambiguity and double-meaning, and to adapt them as much as possible to the present state of the societies.

6.—In order to prevent the laws becoming obsolete, and to guard against any future collisions between the preachers and the people, some guarantee is required that they shall in future be better observed. Whether this guarantee shall consist in the introduction of the principle of lay representation, or in any other mode, can only be determined when the general sense of the Societies is ascertained. Your committee has no wish to dictate the particular mode of effecting this, but would leave the subject, at present, open to serious deliberation, and calm and Christian discussion.

In brief, the object of the Association is to restore to the Societies peace and order, established on the only secure basis of responsibility on the part of the preachers, and content on that of the people.

Whether or not these demands contain any thing "new in Methodism," we leave it to our readers to judge. But the sapient writer before us states, "it may be information to these gentlemen to be told that neither Christianity nor English law will be found to tolerate principles analogous to theirs." We confess this is "*information*," to us at least. We had hitherto, in our blindness and ignorance, imagined that the practice of the apostles was consistent with Christianity, and having examined our New Testament carefully, we cannot find any instance of their assuming power to dictate in temporal matters to their lay brethren. We had also foolishly (it appears) thought that the essence of the English constitution consisted in the circumstance of each order in the state having a voice, through their representatives, in every important transaction; we have also considered that the English law permits no man to combine in his own person the offices of accuser, jury, and judge. It has generally been supposed that the English law permits any man, or number of men, if they feel themselves aggrieved, to meet, petition, and remonstrate, until they obtain redress. But a new light has arisen, a flood of information has poured upon us, and suddenly discovered the astounding fact that Christianity and the English law are both combined to uphold the divine right of Methodist preachers to do wrong with impunity, and to stifle the voice of complaint.

This reverend divine informs us that he "rather thinks" that "if the primitive Christians had formed themselves into an association, that they would soon have experienced the utmost punishment of the Church, —ejection from its communion." We, however, "rather think," that the primitive Christians had no occasion to form an association, —as the apostles and fathers were not in the habit of turning a deaf ear to the remonstrances of their flocks, and left the government of the Church in the hands of the people. But it appears "that English law does not tolerate a government by private juntas of self-elected patriots." We believe not, neither does it tolerate a government by juntas of self-elected preachers meeting to consult with closed doors.

We are next told that the laws against disturbers of the peace (we suppose the abrogated law of 1796) are not strong enough, and want amplifying and strengthening. We wonder how this is to be done. Our preachers already, like the celebrated Dr. Sangrado, who had but



one remedy, bleeding and hot water, for every complaint, have only one punishment for every offence, excision or extermination. Let any man, whoever he may be, lift up his voice to denounce the late outrageous proceedings of the preachers, and we will answer for it, his Methodistical existence is not worth five weeks' purchase. When men are first kicked out, and then attempted to be robbed of their fair fame, as Mr. David Rowland and others have been, we do not see much "amplification" possible, unless, perhaps, culprits are to be sent to the "Theological Institution" to learn submission, and to be thumb-screwed into compliance by the learned president. One more remark, and we have done; it is asserted that the object of the Association is to destroy the present government of Methodism, and to prepare another system of government "suited to the times," &c., and therefore it is held up to ridicule and contempt. What was the ostensible purpose of the Institution? Was it not to educate preachers in a manner suited to the times—suited to the improved education of the people? What was the Plan of Pacification, and the further concessions of 1797? Were they not attempts to suit the laws to the times? Why have the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism been permitted among us, but to suit Methodism to the times? Why have fine chapels, "Brunswick TEMPLES," been built at an enormous expense, burdened with debt, and organs and Church prayers introduced, but in fancied compliance with the times? The spirit of the times, it seems, is only to be resisted when it runs counter to the darling power of the ruling party. But seriously, the whole assertion is false; the Association do *not* wish to destroy the present system of Methodism, nor to throw one straw in the way of its usefulness; but they do wish to introduce the principle of responsibility into its government, and by combining the interests of all parties into one harmonious whole, to destroy discontent by removing its cause. If we are to have a common government, with which a final appeal must lie, let the people have a share in it, and they will be satisfied. If the people are not to have a share in the general government, at least let them not be, as at present, entirely under the control of a single individual in their leaders' and quarterly meetings, who can expound the laws as he pleases, dismiss the meeting when it suits him, and refuse or allow any subject to be brought forward, according as his humour may be at the moment. One mode of defence of the present system, and that the only legitimate one, is carefully avoided by our opponents,—that of appealing to reason and Scripture. If the present administration of Methodist government is agreeable to these, let it be proved,—if it be not, let it perish. We have not time to add more at present, but expect to be able to resume the subject before long.

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We ought by no means to think it strange that many of the preachers and others, should violently oppose a reformation among us. History informs us that persecution has always been the lot of those who sought to redress grievances, either in Church or State. If the people are resolved on obtaining their just rights, opposition and commotion will run high against them, from those who wish to retain undue power and influence. It is a happy circumstance for our people that the Deed of Declaration is good for nothing; and that all the houses fixed on the Conference Plan are absolutely in the hands of their respective trustees. Nothing can make us a distinct people in the eye of the law, but an Act of Parliament. In consequence of this, the preachers have no power over any house but by the sufferance of the trustees."—*A. Kilham, 1796.*

## MR. DAVID ROWLAND AND MR. CHARLES FERGIE.

The two first numbers of the "Calumniator," or Chronicle of Scandal, contain two attacks on the private characters of the above individuals, of the most cowardly and diabolical nature. These impotent attempts at blasting the reputation of persons whose characters have been hitherto irreproachable, are fair specimens of the usual mode adopted by the opposite party to silence, if possible, those who differ from them. We "speak advisedly" when we say *impotent* attempts, for we happen to know that the principal feelings excited, even amongst their own partisans, by these malignant effusions, were those of utter disgust and contempt. Mr. Rowland has been a member of Society about thirty years, and a class leader and local preacher about twenty years; his piety and usefulness, and general respectability of character have, up to this period, never been questioned by those who have known "his manner of life from the beginning;" to this, the prosperity of his class, his general popularity as a preacher, as well as the high tokens of regard he has experienced from the public bodies by whom he is employed, bear the most ample testimony. The falsehood of the slanderous imputations alluded to were fully exposed by Mr. Farrer, at the Music-hall, on Thursday, the 22nd ult., as reported in No. 4 of the *Lantern*, page 50, to which we refer those of our readers who wish the subject to be explained. We merely mention it here for the purpose of showing up the tactics of the Conference party. Not many days before the present agitation commenced, one of the preachers called at Mr. Rowland's house for the purpose of inciting him to take a leading part in the prayer meetings, &c., at that time carried on in Leeds-street Chapel, and expressed to a member of Mr. R.'s family that his services could not possibly be dispensed with, and that without his assistance the cause must sink, or words to that effect. And this is the man who, a few weeks after, is held up to public odium and contempt, and crimes darkly insinuated against him which would blast his character, not simply as a religious man, but unfit him for maintaining an honourable position in civil society! Why is this? How can we account for the optics of our preachers becoming so suddenly microscopic, that the moles in the eyes of their brethren are magnified so enormously as to deface and destroy the fair reputation they have hitherto maintained? Why? Mr. Rowland has dared to think for himself; he has had the audacity to lift his voice against the late flagrant violations of law by the preachers, and to denounce the Conference system as unscriptural and unjust, and therefore *he must be put down*. Had he been *prudent* enough to look at the proceedings of the preachers through a different medium, or even to hold his tongue, he might have carried on his "tricks" against either Mr. S—— or any body else, with impunity; the broad shield of ecclesiastical protection would have been held over him, as it has been before over others, in cases of drunkenness, and even of worse crimes. Were we disposed we could mention "*tricks*" of a very serious character, perpetrated by individuals who were high in the confidence and intimacy of the preachers; were we disposed to "put questions" to some of the chief supporters of Conference in Liverpool, who now carry a high head among us, we apprehend it would not be so easy for them to give a satisfactory answer; but we forbear; our cause is too sacred to

require assistance from such a polluted source. No! it is with shame and sorrow that we see Methodist preachers engaged in inditing, or at all events disseminating, by every means in their power, slanders of this abominable description. We have now before us a letter from Bishop Auckland, written by an official member of society in that place, one who was an inmate of Mr. Rowland's house for several years, and who owes his conversion under God to that gentleman's affectionate care and example, deeply sympathizing with him, and full of the most fervent expressions of gratitude and affection. Many similar tokens of esteem, both written and verbal, have been proffered; so that Mr. Rowland's character, from the attempts to injure it, has only risen higher in the estimation of all whose opinion is of the slightest value.

No. 2 of the *Illuminator* contained a series of the basest imputations on the character of Mr. C. Fergie, intended, doubtless, to impugn his veracity; having dared to assert, as there are several others ready to prove, that the Rev. Samuel Jackson stated, more than once, before the expulsion, that Mr. H. Pooley's case was decided on. After various imputations the *reverend* editor refers for his authority to Sharp's spirit vaults, Richmond-row, and Mrs. Yates, publican, Circus-street. These individuals have been applied to, as requested, and the result has been, that the reverend editor convicts himself of a flagrant breach of the Ninth Commandment. That our readers may judge, we insert below the certificates from these individuals. Mr. Fergie, naturally feeling his mind hurt, applied to the publisher of the *Illuminator* to insert the replies of the very individuals who had been referred to, but *was refused*, and answered by a pitiful sneaking shuffle, unworthy, of any one with the least pretensions to the character of an honourable man.

The following are the documents:—

(COPY.)

*To the Editor of the Illuminator.*

SIR,—After what appeared in your last publication bearing against my character, as affecting the credibility of my evidence in the case of Mr. Pooley, I trust that, (whoever you may be) as a professing member of a religious community, you will make the only reparation in your power by publishing this communication. The foregoing testimonials will set me right in the view of my friends and the society generally. As to your attempt to connect me or my class leader with the “late *faithful* and *confidential* servant of the bootmaker in Islington,” you are the best judge of the motives which dictated it; it may be sufficient for me to say, without at all reflecting on his character, (for from what *I know* of it, it is good,) he is no associate of mine, further than his having been a teacher in the Sunday School, of which I am Superintendent, and occasionally working for me and my family.—I am your much injured brother,

CHARLES FERGIE.

18, Circus-street, Jan. 30, 1835.

(COPY 2.)

*To the Editor of the Illuminator.*

SIR,—In refutation of the insinuations relative to the character of Mr. Charles Fergie, we beg to testify, so far as reference is made to us, that though president of a benevolent society held at our house, which calls him frequently to our establishment on business, we never heard him use an improper expression, much less an oath; that he cannot sing a song if he would, and we are persuaded his industrious efforts to provide for a family of five children do not permit him to keep late hours, and know that he never was in our house on the morning of the Sabbath.

A. & J. SHARP.

Richmond-row, Jan. 23, 1835.

(COPY 3.)

*To the Editor of the Illuminator.*

SIR,—Mr. Charles Fergie has been my next door neighbour for nine years, and my tenant for eighteen months; he has on many occasions been kind enough to transact important business for me which my great age renders impossible that I should do myself. In all my acquaintance with him I never knew him guilty of the conduct laid to his charge in the *Illuminator*, but, on the contrary, have always proved him to be an upright and steady man.

*Circus-street, Jan. 23, 1835.*

MARY YATES.

(COPY 4.)

*To the Editor of the Illuminator.*

SIR,—Having heard that a foul and scurrilous attack has been made upon the character of our employer, Mr. Charles Fergie, we, the undersigned, having an opportunity of witnessing his conduct, working upon the same board with him, are willing to come forward and deny the whole of the assertions contained in the pages of the *Illuminator*.

THOMAS CORLESS.

CHARLES TAYLOR.

THOMAS ROBERTS.

*January 30, 1835.*

Although we have considered it a duty we owed to Mr. Fergie to notice the slanders mentioned above, it is not our intention again to be diverted from a regular course by any similiar personalities.—*Edit.*

## PROCEEDINGS AT SHEERNESS.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—I take up my pen to give you an account of the proceedings of the Branch Association in this place, as well as of the sufferings which some of its members have to endure in the cause of liberty, and the means making use of by the superintendent (Mr. Joshua Marsden) in order to bring them into contempt. His vacillating conduct will, no doubt, greatly surprise you, after the various statements that have been put forth respecting his liberality, and which, at the periods named, was strictly true. When he came into the circuit, in order to preach the anniversary sermons in behalf of the trust funds, his political opinions were strictly inquired into, there being, at that time, much agitation in the body in reference to the case of Mr. Stephens, and also about the College: this was during the sittings of the last Conference. As regarded the case of Mr. Stephens, he said that "the Conference had agreed to take him back unconditionally, and to reverse the decision of the District meeting, but that Mr. Stephens had acted with great contumacy, and would not return on those terms. That he disapproved entirely of the College; that the Missionary Committee were going to apply £700 per annum to the support thereof; that he disapproved of the union of Church and State, and that it would not be advocated again in the *Magazine*; that we should see a different feature therein, for the editor would be changed." These declarations encouraged us to invite him to come to the circuit. He accepted the invitation upon a promise that his board money should be raised from fourteen to eighteen shillings per week. Two individuals guaranteed him the payment thereof, if the Quarterly meeting should refuse to pay it. He came, and all for a time went on well. When Dr. Warren was suspended, Mr. Marsden said it was cruel and illegal. "Did any man ever hear of such a case," said he, "for the accuser to be the judge; and, who cares for such men as Johnny Anderson?" He told us, he felt it to be his duty to protest against their illegal decision. Moreover, he said, Dr. Warren could re-instate himself again by a suit in Chancery. When our Quarterly meeting came, he told us, that he would carry any resolutions we might propose to the District meeting. Resolutions were drawn up, condemnatory of the College, and stating that it was "founded in intrigue and worldly policy." These last words Mr. Marsden suggested the propriety of altering, to the words "founded on an infringement of the just rights of the people," stating that it would appear better, which was immediately assented to by the meeting.

The resolutions had been prepared with a clause declaring that if the Conference applied any moneys to the College which had been collected for other purposes they would withhold all contributions to the Conference Funds. When this, accompanying the others, was given to the individual appointed to move them, he stated that he could not see his way quite clear to move it, in consequence of the



injury the funds might sustain thereby : it was, therefore, withdrawn, and another brother appointed to move it separately. When he did so the Chairman (Mr. Marsden) said "Oh, that should go with the other." The meeting then passed the whole together; and our worthy president received and acknowledged a vote of thanks for his liberal conduct whilst in the chair. I am thus particular in describing the part Mr. Marsden took therein because of his recent change of opinion, that is, if his actions may be regarded as a real change of opinion, and, also, from the circumstances of its having since been attempted to be set forth that the resolutions were smuggled through the Quarterly meeting.

Now the friends, considering that Mr. Marsden was sincere in all that he did, and willing to support him in the cause of liberty, which he described to have so well learnt during his sojourning in America, took the liberty of asking the London Missionary Committee, whether they intended to apply any portion of the Mission Fund toward the support of the College. They replied by stating that a deputation should attend at Sheerness, to give all the information required; and here Mr. Marsden began, from some (to us) unaccountable cause, to alter. He wrote and prevented their coming; this gave considerable dissatisfaction: nine members of the committee at Sheerness addressed the general Secretaries, stating that they considered explanation necessary. No notice was taken thereof. When the committee met at the latter end of the year, it was moved that the moneys be retained in hand till after the next Conference, in order that it might be seen how it was to be applied. An amendment was made, "That the money be paid as heretofore:" this was lost. A general meeting was then called to reconsider the question; at this meeting the superintendent attended, and with much warmth and bitterness deprecated any such procedure. The various reasons were stated by the friends why it should be retained, and his (the superintendent's) own language quoted to him, wherein he condemned the College, and the application of the Mission Fund to its support; and also the District meeting which so cruelly and illegally expelled Dr. Warren: all this, with the strongest asseverations, he flatly denied ever to have said.

Here two or three of the committee stepped forward, and declared that the Rev. Gentleman had expressed the same sentiments to them; and one of them cuttingly remarked, "Sir, can you blame me? what I am you made me: you gave me that information that has made me come to the decision I have; and if I am wrong, it is my pastor that has led me so." In reply to these individuals, nothing was obtained but "It is false—it is false! I deny it! You have gypsified my words altogether. I never used them in the sense you attribute to them." This was too much to be borne. The person above alluded to then turned round, and appealing to his brethren, said, "Brethren, am I a liar? Mr. Marsden declared to me that he disapproved of the College, and also of the application of the Mission Fund to its support; likewise of the conduct of the District meeting in suspending Dr. Warren. In the presence of my God, I declare this to be the truth." Still Mr. Marsden flatly denied it; but amidst it all there was one thing which he did declare to be true, and that was, that he had said, "I have cut with Mr. Bunting!"

Prior to the question being put to the vote, the treasurer, who is also trustee steward, made some remarks on the business, when, with a view to prejudice the case, Mr. Marsden said, "You, Sir,—you are a swindler. You are a dishonourable man!" "How?" was the reply. "Why," said Mr. Marsden, "you have drawn a bill upon me, and I have no funds to pay: you are a swindler, Sir!" The individual to whom this was addressed was astounded, and so was the whole of the meeting. This was a ruse which they could not expect. An explanation was demanded, when Mr. Marsden said that he (the trustee steward) had ordered Mr. Mason to draw a bill upon him (Mr. M.) for 8s. 6d. without his consent, for an advertisement inserted on the cover of the *Methodist Magazine* for January, 1835. The trustee steward said that a meeting of the trustees directed him to write to Mr. Mason to insert an advertisement in the *Magazine* for January, which there was but just time to get in, the truth of which any one might see if they would look on the cover of that periodical, as it arrived too late to get into the proper place; and that he had directed Mr. Mason to forward the bill by his book parcel to Mr. Marsden, and he would pay him. He stated that he understood this was the regular mode of doing the business, and begged of Mr. Marsden to give him the bill and he would pay him; which he did in the presence of the meeting, on the 5th January. Four of the trustees who were present stated that the stewards acted under the direction of the trustees; that no fraud could possibly be intended; and that it was consummate cruelty to attach any such design to the individual. The secret may possibly be contained herein,—the person thus

vilified is a member of the Manchester Association, and it now become the fashion with some persons to designate all such as "unprincipled men." Surely this statement should be read by every trustee throughout the Connexion. Trustees in want of money order the steward to insert an advertisement in the *Methodist Magazine*, and then, because the steward was ordered to be so by the superintendent, to save trouble, charge the statement on a petty fund. I fear this statement is so black as scarcely to be credited, but if any one doubts the truth thereof, the writer of this article pledges himself to produce a document duly signed by various persons who were present, and witnessed the whole transaction, which took place in the vestry of a chapel capable of holding a thousand persons. "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord!"

When the question as to whether the money should be retained in hand was put to the meeting, there were nine for doing so, and ten against, a majority of only one for forwarding the balance in hand. The discussion being protracted to a great length, caused three to withdraw from the meeting who would have voted against sending the money.

Shortly after this came our Christmas quarterly meeting, and at that the superintendent had the effrontery to charge us 15s. 8d. for letters. Knowing that there had been but very few letters on the business of the circuit, one of the members of the meeting ventured to inquire, whether this charge was for business concerning the circuit, or whether for the President's gagging letter, &c.? when it appeared that the charge was made for public letters received on the present state of the Connexion; thus our enemies are loading us with abuse, and actually making us pay the postage thereof. This being the quarter in which the circuit steward is again re-elected (if approved) for a second year, the steward, who is a member of the Manchester Association, duly resigned, was again nominated by the Rev. Joshua Marsden, and unanimously elected by the meeting.

At the leaders' meeting, on Wednesday, the 21st of January, the election for the town and country societies' stewards came on; and now mark the inconsistency. They are both members of the Manchester Association, and also trustees of the chapel. The town steward having resigned, his first year expiring, (the last town steward was in office nearly twenty years,) Mr. Marsden stated he could by no means nominate him to stand again, for he had heard him say "the Methodist preachers were tyrants," and he therefore could not think of allowing him to be in office as steward again. The steward replied, that when he made that remark he did not apply it to the whole, but to the present ruling power, and instanced their abominable conduct in expelling so many valuable men from their societies; but he told the chairman that he did not think that was the whole of the reason,—it was because he was a member of the Manchester Association he would not again nominate him. Mr. Marsden stated, certainly that was another reason why he would not nominate him. Here the country steward noticed the injustice of the proceeding, at which the Rev. Gentleman called out, "I will unship you, Sir; you are an artful, designing man; you are working by talismanic influence over the minds of others; I will tell the congregation about these things; you are disturbing the peace of the society." He then refused to nominate either of them to stand again, and named two others, threatening his vengeance against the outgoing stewards. To what lengths he would proceed, if he had the power, is evidently seen,—namely, expulsion, and he may even now perhaps act the farce; but they are both trustees, and cannot be expelled without a majority of the trustees vote for their expulsion; and supposing this to be the case, they would still continue to exercise their functions as trustees, because the remaining trustees would not give them an indemnification for their responsibilities, the amount of debt being large, and until they receive such release they would not re-convey their right in the premises, but retain their power therein.

In all probability Mr. Marsden will use all his ingenuity and malevolence to expel these two trustees, and to bring them into contempt with the people, by holding them up as destroyers of the peace of Jerusalem, but all his puny efforts will be unavailing, whilst they have the power to enter upon the premises, at all times, when they feel disposed to do so. Whilst trustees can sell the premises, and pay the debt, they may stand unmoved at all the threats of irresponsible men, who only occupy by sufferance. As the members of the Association are now marked out as objects of revenge, it becomes them to unite more closely together, to endeavour, by all means, to increase their borders, and form a mighty phalanx against despotism, cruelty, and tyranny.

Sheerness, Jan. 23, 1835.

AN ENEMY TO DUPLICITY.

## PROCEEDINGS AT TODMORDEN.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Want of leisure has prevented us from communicating earlier to you some account of the last quarterly meeting of this circuit, held on the 26th ult. at Luddenden. We got no authority from the meeting itself to do this; and being, therefore, *unofficial* information, we leave *you* to judge whether it should be made public, and in what way—you are the only persons we shall write to on the subject.

Some days previous to the quarterly meeting, the superintendent asked one of the circuit stewards what was intended to be brought forward in the meeting, relative to the existing dissatisfaction amongst the people in various circuits. He was answered that, either some resolutions would be submitted to the meeting, or a memorial to the President, on the subject. The superintendent replied, "Well, I want the matter to be looked fairly in the face, and the budget opened, and fully discussed." The rejoinder was, "To that, Sir, there can be no objection." "But," he added, "I am afraid there will be no time on the quarter day; we had better fix a day on purpose." "Very well," said the steward, "a beginning may be made that day, and, if we cannot finish, adjourn the meeting to some other day; and whatever is done, I should like us to keep our tempers, and avoid being angry with one another."

This certainly pleased us, for we had anticipated opposition; and we joyfully looked upon it as a favourable symptom. Subsequently, however, we were told that the superintendent would not allow the subject to be introduced in *any shape*. The expectation of this subject being brought forward either with or without the preacher's consent, and also the expectation that a change of circuit stewards would be proposed, induced a general determination amongst the officers to be present.

Accordingly an unusual number, for that distant part of the circuit, at this season of the year, assembled. Several were there who had not been at a quarterly meeting for some time before. The whole were upwards of eighty.

The local preachers' meeting was held before dinner. At dinner one asked a circuit steward if he had heard what had passed in the local preachers' meeting? "No." "Well, but the inquisition has begun." "Indeed! what has occurred?" "A promising young man at the head of the circuit should have been received, and put upon the plan, but the superintendent rejected him, because he had subscribed himself a member of the Association." "And did the local preachers submit?" "They did! although they disapproved of the rejection, and moved and seconded a motion for his reception, which the superintendent refused to put." In the meeting of stewards and leaders, &c. after dinner, one of the oldest local preachers, and a circuit steward, being sorry that he himself had not taken the *sense* of the local preachers' meeting on the matter, attempted to introduce the subject there; but the chairman stopped him, stating that it belonged alone to the local preachers' meeting. It may now be added, that the young man in question has been persuaded, by the preachers and their adherents, to withdraw from the Association; and he has waited upon his leader, requiring his name to be erased from the Association, but stating explicitly that it was not because his views had altered, but because he could not have his name on the local preachers' plan without it. Had it not been for this withdrawal, another local preachers' meeting would have been held purposely to reconsider his case.

But to return to the quarterly meeting. The ordinary business having been despatched, the nomination of circuit stewards commenced. The oldest resident at the lower extremity of the circuit, was nominated for re-election, and unanimously approved. That being disposed of, the next proposition was that the office of the other two stewards ceases, according to rule, at the end of the year; and, therefore, the superintendent nominated for the head of the circuit a young pious man, of a rich family, and much and deservedly respected, on whom the preachers justly passed many eulogiums.

After the nomination, &c. a judicious member of the meeting rose, and spoke to this effect:—"Brethren, you are assembled to-day for the purpose of performing an important duty. Think what you are about. Don't go away from this meeting and say 'The preachers have done so and so;' 'The preachers did it,' when in fact, it will be your *own* doing. Again I say, Think what you are about, and do your duty fearlessly." Another immediately followed, and said, "The preacher merely *names* the officer; it is for *you* to appoint: if you approve of the

individual now nominated, hold up your hands when called upon; if you think there needs no change, *keep your hands down.*" Another remarked, "We need no change—we cannot have a better; and this is a time of extraordinary agitation, and we ought to have no change: if the circuit steward is to be the representative of the people, then let the old one be re-elected." A show of hands was called for, and twenty were counted in favour of the one nominated, and forty against him.

The superintendent mildly expressed his regret; said he *must* have a change; and urged upon the meeting the individual whom he had nominated. A former speaker then said, "I dare say the meeting will be more willing to accede to a change, if they can be convinced that it is *NOT owing* to the peculiar opinions of the present circuit steward that he is to be removed from office." To this the superintendent merely answered, he had had no quarrel—no unpleasantness with the Todmorden steward; "But," said he, "I must have a change." The oldest circuit steward said he would rather, under present circumstances, go out of office himself, than there should be a change in the stewardship at the head of the circuit. Another candidly spoke thus of the steward sought to be displaced:—"I know no reason why *he* should be preferred; a fitter person than *he* may be found. It is well known that *he* is at the head of these radicals; but they are only a few. For my part, I would rather have in office a milder and modester man." The last remark produced a loud laugh; for it is notorious, that the words could not at all apply to either the temper or disposition, the manners or behaviour, of the individual in question, especially on public occasions. However, the meeting *then* knew, if they did not before, the character of the steward intended to be put out of office.

One observed, that whatever objection might be made to the opinions of the Todmorden steward now in office, (for he should contend that he remained in office until another was appointed to take his place,) yet he had this recommendation, he did not conceal his opinions, but frankly declared them.

The superintendent persisted in saying, "I *must* have a change;" and again urged the person he had already nominated. That individual, however, said he should not submit to be put in nomination again; and at length *another* was nominated: but *that* would not do, although the steward himself used his influence with the meeting in behalf of this second nomination. A large majority was against *him* also; and, some time after, when this individual was put in nomination *again*, he was *again* rejected by a large majority. Why this difficulty in getting a change? Because no reformer was nominated. The first is decidedly an anti-reformer, the other a waverer.

Foiled in their attempts, the preachers then said, "If you will not appoint whom we nominate, you must be *without* a steward." A murmur of dissatisfaction thrilled through the meeting. It was here broken off, and resumed the last thing before the meeting closed. One of us said privately to the superintendent, "It will never do to let the meeting break up, whilst so many are dissatisfied about the Todmorden steward." "What can I do?" he said. We replied, "You must either nominate one whom you know the meeting will not reject, or distinctly announce that the old steward remains in office." At last he announced that the circuit steward resident at Todmorden remained in office till the next quarterly meeting.

In the place of the middle steward a person was nominated, and unanimously approved; but he emphatically said, "Under present circumstances I cannot conscientiously accept the office. I thank you for this expression of your opinion, but I cannot, I *will* not act."

Having ascertained that one of our three preachers had made up his mind to leave us, at the next Conference, as he would then have been two years; we nominated two or three others, and appointed a corresponding committee to invite them in rotation till one should accede to the request. We then gave a separate, cordial, and unanimous invitation to the two preachers, our superintendent and his colleague, who came to us at the last Conference, to remain with us another year, when they expressed their willingness to stay, if peace could be preserved. They testified their sorrow at the existing dissensions, and said they wished to be instrumental in saving souls amongst us. But they must have the co-operation of the people; and in order to this, their respect and confidence; and in order to all, love. "But what," said the superintendent, "have I seen this day? You say you love us, but will not act with us." Several in the meeting assured the preachers of their undissembled love, but claimed a right to exercise their own judgment on every thing, notwithstanding; and protested against



the inference, evidently drawn by the preachers, that when an individual differed from them in opinion, *that* was evidence of a want of love.

The oldest circuit steward remarked, with much feeling, to this effect:—"I have for many years filled the office of circuit steward, and have ever felt an ardent and disinterested attachment to Methodism. I have done what I have done conscientiously, and have studied to be consistent throughout. It grieves me to the heart when I hear of disturbances in our Zion, by whomsoever caused. My mind is exceedingly pained *at present*, when I view the agitated state of the Connexion; the blame of which, in great part, must, I think, be charged upon the preachers themselves. We cannot here, indeed, remedy these things; but it is proper that the President should be called upon by us to bring about a reconciliation."

The individual who had been nominated for the middle steward followed, somewhat thus:—"I claim for myself the independent exercise of my own judgment, and liberty to give expression to my conscientious opinions. I will not be led by any man—by any number of men,—no, not by the Duke of Wellington himself, nor Sir Robert Peel either: I will, in all cases, think for myself, and act for myself; nor shall any man living gag me. It may appear to you somewhat strange; but, for the first time in my life, I read over, last Wednesday evening, the Plan of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797. I must say that I was struck with the beautiful spirit of those documents, throughout which there breathes nothing but kindness and conciliation. I could not but contrast those documents with the London Declaration, the Manchester Declaration, the Bolton Declaration, and (the Halifax Declaration being in a newspaper on the table, which he forcibly struck with his hand at the time) pardon me, Gentlemen, if I add, with *this Declaration!* I am sorry to see in these late manifestos so little of the truly Christian spirit of gentleness and love, which is so conspicuous in the Constitution of 1795 and 1797. That the preachers have violated that Constitution, I am firmly convinced; but I do not approve of all that is proposed to remedy the evil. I think we should explicitly avow our attachment to Wesleyan Methodism, and in a spirit of love call upon the Conference, in the most respectful manner, to revise the Constitution, and make it so plain that neither preachers nor people can misunderstand it," &c. &c.

The Todmorden steward then said, "One of my colleagues in office having been allowed to make some remarks on this subject, and also another individual, I also may be permitted to offer a few observations. With the preceding speaker I cordially agree. I can sincerely adopt his sentiments, and also the language in which those sentiments have been conveyed, as my own; but I am not so glib-tongued as he, and cannot give you an extemporaneous address fit to be heard by the side of his; I shall, therefore, beg leave to read my speech on this subject:

"PUBLIC OPINION has now such commanding influence, by means of the press, that no body of men can long escape its power. It has found its way into every religious society, and, last of all, unavoidably into our own. Two antagonist principles pre-eminently occupy the public mind, and each is struggling for supremacy. They pervade alike both civil and religious society; and the question at issue is, Does government exist for the benefit of the governors, or the benefit of the governed? or, in other words, shall despotism or liberty be the grand principle of government both in Church and State?

"Disguise it as we will, there is an enlightened spirit abroad that is resolved to disarm despotism of its absolute power, and suffer no irresponsible tyranny to exist in either ecclesiastical or civil government.

"This being the case, it need not be matter of surprise that all public bodies are subjected to a jealous watchfulness and a rigid scrutiny, which it is impossible to prevent. Nor need we wonder that, amongst others, the Wesleyan Conference is called to undergo the common ordeal.

"And (apart from any overt acts of Conference, or its representatives) its constitution and laws, its duties and powers, are subjects of investigation. In the course of inquiry, questions such as these arise, "Did Mr. Wesley possess absolute power? Had he authority to convey such a power to his successors in the ministry? Did not the Popish priesthood pretend to inherit, by succession, the authority of the Apostles? And did not they, actuated by this lofty notion, make sad havoc among the churches? Again, Did not the Methodists, soon after Mr. Wesley's death in 1791, feel so dissatisfied as to extort from the preachers, in 1795 and 1797, a signed treaty; in which, amongst other things, they say, 'Thus, brethren, we have GIVEN UP the greatest part of our executive government into your hands?' And according to which, (as expressed in

'Strictures on Methodism, by a careful Observer, in 1804,') the leaders were constituted *judges* of themselves and the people; and it was put out of the power of preachers to dismiss a leader from his office without the sanction of a leaders' meeting." Does not this treaty contain, exclusively as regards the people, the fundamental laws of the Connexion, which cannot be altered without the people's consent? which cannot be violated without evident breach of faith? Again, in accordance with the spirit and letter of these documents, is it not the duty of Conference to ascertain the wishes of the people, and obtain their consent, before any important measure be carried into effect? In short, to share their power with the officers of the church, as co-pastors with them? Does not our Divine Master (Matt. xx. 25 and 26) prohibit the exercise of *assumed* dominion over one another? Again, Does not the Plan of Pacification *limit* the power of the priesthood, and, in fact, render preachers amenable to a meeting composed in part of the officers of the Church? Thus, (Head I, P. 2,) "Every preacher, trustee, steward, and leader, shall have a single vote \* \* \*," and if the majority of the meeting *judge* that the accused preacher is *immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities*, or has *broken any of the rules* above mentioned, he shall be considered as removed from that circuit.

"In considering these things, the inference appears to me inevitable, that arbitrary power and irresponsible authority on the part of the preachers were "in good faith," relinquished in 1795 and 1797; and that it was so done, agreeably, at once with the wishes of the elders, and the testimony of the Divine Scriptures.

"But when I view the opinions latterly recorded in the Conference organs, not to mention the pamphlets of individual preachers, I am pained to observe traces of the old Popish *jus divinum*, claiming for the ministry *exclusively* as of *Divine right*, and without any authoritative control from the Church itself; and even without mentioning the restrictions in our Chapel Deeds; not merely the administration, but the *sole right* of expounding and maintaining,—1. Gospel Doctrines; 2. Ordinances; and, 3. Moral Discipline.

"Nor is it mere theory. The active proceedings of the preachers, in cases of dispute, and the subsequent confirmations by Conference, I conceive evince a settled purpose, on the part of the present race of preachers, to demolish the people's Bill of Rights of 1795 and 1797, and to re-establish unlimited authority.

"Hence the suspensions and expulsions at sundry places without the consent, and even in defiance of, the local officers; and hence, also, the *immediate* establishment of the Theological Institution at London, without ascertaining the opinions of the people on the subject. I might mention also the acceptance of £900 a year from Government for the Canada Mission. With these apparent approaches to the usages of Episcopacy before our eyes, we cannot wonder at the avowal by Conference that we are *not* DISSENTERS.

"But what do the body of our laity conscientiously think on this subject? For myself, I declare I *am* a Dissenter, on principle: I disapprove of the union of Church and State; and, moreover, think that an absolute government in *any* church is unscriptural and dangerous. For proof of this, (to go no further,) I point to our gigantic, but formal, State-Church at home, and the deeply-fallen Church of Rome, as mother and daughter; and also to the dissensions now unhappily existing in our own body.

"These dissensions cannot be attributed to *mere faction*, since they embrace almost entire societies, as is the case at Rochdale; whose society has ever ranked high in the estimation of the preachers. It is no dishonour to be classed with such a society as the Rochdale. But whatever opinion the *Conference* may form of us, my conviction is that *something is wrong in the present system*; that there will be no end to controversy, schism, and divisions till the evil is probed to the bottom, and an *effectual* remedy applied; and that a perseverance on the part of preachers in uncontrollable coercive measures, instead of being remedial, will utterly alienate the affections of the people.

"I, therefore, deprecate and protest against all expulsions by the *sole* authority of the preachers, *excepting only* cases of *unquestioned* immorality and of false doctrine. And in order to restore peace to the Connexion, I advise that this meeting earnestly call upon the President to adopt some prompt conciliatory proceedings, and cause such a revision (*in a liberal spirit*) of the Constitution of 1795 and 1797, that hereafter, as to the Constitution of the law, as well as the *law itself*, there may be *no dispute, nor any obstacle against security for its observance.*"

In reply, one of the preachers observed, in a pleasant spirit, he would not be called a Pope; the assumption of *absolute* power by the preachers he denied in toto; and the Canadian Grant was not peculiar to the Methodists, but the

Colonial Government granted a separate sum to all sects, in proportion to their necessities.

The Leeds case was referred to, as a string of facts illustrative of the assumption of *arbitrary power* on the part of the preachers.

The same preacher said he had no objection to go into that case, were there time, but would at any other period discuss the matter, and undertake to vindicate the preachers from the charge of assuming *absolute power*. The superintendent added that the Leeds Special District Meeting itself was called at the suggestion of the aggrieved party, &c., but there was not time to go into all the particulars. The congregation began to assemble in the chapel for preaching, and the meeting closed.

Every thing was done without rancour or clamour. There was a prevailing good temper throughout the meeting; and in this the preachers excelled, and did themselves much credit. In this exemplary spirit they were completely overruled, with regard to new circuit stewards; and, contrary to their previous wish, the cause of dissensions in various circuits was discussed; and, ultimately, a committee of seven was appointed to draw up a memorial, after the model mentioned by the last speaker but one, and submit it to the next quarterly meeting.

There was no need of haste, it was stated, as the president of the Conference had refused to call a special Conference. So much had been said about preachers doing things illegally, that he was resolved to do nothing of the sort, and, therefore, things must go on without that till next July.—I am, yours, respectfully,

Todmorden, Jan. 8, 1835.

A LOOKER ON.

## THE NANTWICH SUPERINTENDENT AGAIN.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Nothing would have induced me to leave the solitude of my rural retreat but a sense of public duty. Having lately met by accident with a copy of a recent periodical, entitled the *Watchman*, in which there appears a flaming communication of the prosperity of the Nantwich circuit, evidently written by, or with the concurrence of our Superintendent, I feel called upon to state the simple facts of the case there alluded to. I will first just advert to Mr. Tabraham (we have given up calling him Reverend) taking the chair at the Sunday-school tea party. It was not, I assure you, from choice, but from necessity and compulsion. You are too well aware that a certain class of our preachers assume that right in whatever company they make their appearance, and inform us that it devolves on them by *right of office*;—under that *right* he took possession of the chair. But at the Temperance meeting a chairman more congenial to the feelings of the people was proposed; when, astonishing to relate, Mr. Tabraham rose and proposed, "That as he had been a member of the Temperance Society for years, and had been honoured on many occasions by filling the chair, *he thought* (Conferential word!) that as they were only just commencing a Branch Society, *he thought* he would be the most fit and proper person to fill that important station; and more particularly as *he felt himself* qualified to render them the information they required." Under these circumstances *the chair was taken by him!* So much for the boasted seat of honour.

Now with regard to the third particular. As far as relates to the prosperity of the circuit, it is true; but from its ambiguity the idea it seems intended to convey is simply this:—That Mr. Tabraham has been the active and instrumental cause of the preceding good, or that *he* has been the *sole agent* of gathering so many wandering sheep into the fold of Christ. *But is this the fact?* That we have had a revival *is a fact*, in which some hundreds were savingly converted to God, and have since adorned their Christian profession by a corresponding conduct. But, Sir, *all this* took place previous to Mr. Tabraham's visiting this circuit, or his name being so much as known.—Our former preachers, Messrs. Hill and Carter, but particularly Mr. Carter, were pious, zealous, laborious men, and, by the blessing of God upon their exertions, backed by the co-operating energies of our worthy and much esteemed local brethren, the glorious effects were produced. Now I ask, what has Mr. Tabraham to do with Messrs. H. and C.'s labours?—if any honour is due, let it be rendered to whom honour is due. But has Mr. Tabraham done *NOTHING*? O yes, he has done *MUCH*, for which there will be cause to remember *his name* with sorrow for many a future year. No man ever entered a circuit under more flattering and cheering prospects; peace reigned in all our borders; our chapels every where filled with attentive

and pious congregations; our circuit debt completely cancelled; and the expectations of many for the outpouring of the Spirit, and an increase of the work of grace, was most apparent. But our hopes were speedily cut off. We, to our sorrow, soon found that he was possessed of another spirit; "firebrands, arrows, and death" were speedily scattered among us. Our large congregations became disgusted with *his* proud, lordly, and dictatorial conduct; and we have now to mourn over our deserted chapels and declining cause; for many, very many, have stated that they will never, so long as *he* remains in the circuit, again hear *him*.

One circumstance, among many of an extraordinary nature, took place in the vestry of our chapel in Nantwich on the evening of the 12th ult. It is usual to hold a public prayer meeting on Monday evening in that place, and which is well attended. Mr. William Cooper, a respectable tradesman in Nantwich, who had been for years a steady member, and an accepted local preacher, but, in consequence of some misunderstanding with Mr. Hill, our late Superintendent, was by him removed from the Local Preachers' Plan, and most unjustly expelled the society; yet still he was acknowledged by the principal part of the societies as a friend and brother. This individual was in the habit of attending the prayer meetings, and occasionally engaging in the important duty of prayer. On the above night Mr. Tabraham made his appearance for the first time since his arrival in the circuit, and it is evident from all the circumstances of the case (which cannot be particularized) that he came prepared for the sequel. Mr. Tabraham commenced the meeting in a most unusual manner by pointedly calling upon certain individuals (all of the High Church party, and who had been requested by Mr. T. to attend) to pray. One of these so called upon being absent, a sister ventured to engage. The order of the meeting being broken, Mr. William Cooper followed the example of our worthy sister; but he had not proceeded far before an individual (from feelings of delicacy I withhold his name) was observed to whisper to Mr. Tabraham, who abruptly rose from his knees and *vociferated* "STOP, STOP, we must sing; common metre,—common metre, we must sing; common metre." Consternation seized the meeting. "Shame, shame," resounded from every part of the vestry; "such confusion was never witnessed before;" sisters complaining,—brothers protesting,—and his REVERENCE, at the height of his voice, exclaiming, "Peace, peace, my sisters; peace, let us sing."—The uproar was so overwhelming as to reach the ears of Mrs. Tabraham in her own house at the other end of the chapel, who instantly, in company with Mr. T.'s mother, proceeded to the scene of contention, and, in her way thither, met the greater part of the society hastily retiring in disgust from the strife of tongues.

To be brief, the leaders were so roused and disgusted with the line of conduct pursued by Mr. Tabraham, that on Wednesday, at their meeting, they received Mr. Cooper as a much abused brother, and again reinstated him into the society as a member. Mr. Smithson, our second preacher, who is a worthy pious man, and much esteemed throughout the circuit, presided as chairman at the leaders' meeting, and declared, as his opinion, "that Mr. Cooper ought never to have been expelled." So much for Tabraham's tyranny.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Nantwich, Feb. 6, 1835.

PICKLE.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—If you think the following address worthy of a place in your valuable publication, you will oblige me by inserting it as early as possible.

#### ADDRESS TO THE METHODIST PUBLIC.

In addressing myself to the Methodist public I feel rather peculiarly situated. Previous to the Wesleyan Methodist Association being formed, I voluntarily left the Society, on account of the laws having been so flagrantly violated by the superintendent of this circuit; notwithstanding which, I feel as much attached to real Methodism as any of its members. When I left you, as a Society, I saw no prospect of a speedy reform; but, unexpectedly, I find there is a noble stand made against the abuses that now distract this once peace able Connexion. I have frequently thought

The time would come when you would late deplore  
So great a power confided to such hands;

not that I think the ministers of Christ ought, in any wise, to be under a restraint that would prevent them doing justice to the societies of which they have the oversight. No, I think they ought to be respected for their works' sake; and when they do not lord it over God's heritage they ought to be revered, as the ambassadors of Jehovah. You have sufficient proof that there are men amongst you who stand forth to preach the unsearchable riches of the Gospel; who have got so much love to God and his people that they cannot think of taking away those privileges which you have so long enjoyed. If I



may be allowed to mention one name amongst many, I would point out to you Dr. Warren; of him you may say, and say it emphatically,

——— He comes, to whom you owe  
Your liberty, the noblest good below.

Yes, he stands forth as an able advocate for your rights and liberties.

Brethren,—The cause that has called you to action, and the motives that have roused you to the present conflict, are worthy the talent and ability that have been so eminently displayed on the present occasion. When I reflect on the union of sentiment that pervades you, I expect every thing that is great and noble to attend the exertions of so great and united a people. From this time, I think, you may date your liberty; your cause is good, you are united, and you have confidence in the integrity and ability of your leaders. When you can bring to your assistance such men as Gordon, Beynon, Rowland, and many other excellent and talented individuals, who have sufficient courage and prudence to lead you on in the great struggle for your just rights and privileges, and especially when you know that God is on your side, advocating, as you are, the cause of truth and justice, you may well feel assured that you will not struggle in vain. No, while you thus come forth in the cause of freedom, which is the true glory of Methodism, the bands which have held you will be broken asunder; the eyes which have seen the noblest sons of Britain held in spiritual thralldom will see them released from such ignoble bondage, and their rights and liberties safely insured. You are no longer safe in your obscurity; you must continue to lay open the plans, designs, and schemes of your opponents, or they will rush upon you unawares; and as secret things are always magnified, they may think a mighty conquest lies before them, except you bring their deeds to light. You have begun the mighty struggle, previous to which you had allowed almost every thing that was dear to you and your children to be taken from you, and still the insatiable thirst of your ambitious opponents was not satisfied, but wanted still to enslave you, if possible, more than ever: but you have made a noble stand, and have come forth, at the present time, to claim your rights and liberties, with an ardour which does you honour as a Christian body. Yes, you feel the importance of obtaining and securing your just rights, as Englishmen; and when you reflect that not only yourselves but your wives, your children, and all you hold dear, are equally affected with yourselves, it is an additional stimulus to encourage you in your undertaking. You cannot show your regard for them more strongly than by watching over their interests, and protecting their rights and liberties; if you do so, they will at the present, and in time to come, remember you with grateful hearts. You do not go a warfare at your own charge. God is with you; had not this been the case, and had you not felt it a duty which you owe to yourselves, to your families, to your holy religion, and to your God, you might have fainted in your important struggle: but, knowing that every thing that is dear unto you, as Christians, is involved in the present contest, you have come boldly and fearlessly to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

It is impossible for you to see some of the brightest ornaments of civil and religious society treated as objects of derision, and marked out for destruction, without entering your protest against such horrid work. No, you, as a people, I feel assured, will struggle to recover and ensure your liberties; you will go forth as champions, and make one general effort to effect so desirable an object.

Hoping that you may be successful in your undertaking I now close by subscribing myself affectionately,

Oldham, Jan. 20, 1835.

Yours,

T—N—.

We have to make an apology to our correspondent for an error in noticing his communication in a preceding number. It was there stated that "T—N— had forgotten to pay the postage." This we have since ascertained to be a mistake, in consequence of the paid postmark being very indistinct.


#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received since our last from Camelford, Manchester, Anon, Liverpool, London, Pickle, Nantwich, Hull, Ruabon, and Sheffield.

The reply to Mr. Vevers is unavoidably postponed until next week, when we expect to insert, without further delay, the account of the trial and expulsion of Messrs. Morgan, Bridson, and Christian, in the Liverpool South Circuit, by the Rev. George Marsden.

We have in hand several interesting reports of the proceedings at the Quarterly meetings in a number of circuits, which will be valuable in an historical point of view, and which we shall insert at the very earliest opportunity.

Mr. Greenhalgh's letter arrived too late for insertion this week. It shall have an early place.

 *A Supplementary Number of the "Watchman's Lantern," (No. 7,) will be published on Wednesday next, February 18.*

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER.

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**No. 7.**      **WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18, 1835.**      **Price 1½d.**

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A DEFENCE OF THE FIRST "AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS OF  
THE UNITED WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION,"  
BEING A REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS OF MR. VEVERS.

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He who falsely charges upon another the crime of lying, criminales only himself.

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TO THE REV. W. VEVERS.

Sir,

The public have been honoured with an additional effort of your pen in the shape of remarks, intended to invalidate the positions taken by the Association in their "Address" to the Societies. My intention at present is to show that your production is a failure. Before, however, entering upon the discussion, I conceive that some apology is due to the public for the attention I have paid to you, considering the very uncourteous and impertinent style of controversy you have adopted, and which, I fear, will be considered to have placed you in a situation far beneath notice. The only justification, however, which I shall attempt is, that it cannot be from a feeling of respect to you that I write: this I must withhold until you vindicate your pretensions to the character of a gentleman, by apologizing to those respectable individuals whom you have so indecorously insulted. Pray, Sir, what pleasant thoughts were those which tempted you to expose yourself to the ridicule of your readers when you penned the silly, but malignant, exordium, which introduces your learned and luminous criticisms? A very little reflection might have reminded so discerning a person as yourself that calumny and abuse, though framed exactly upon a Conference model, can only injure their harmless fabricators, and that he who falsely charges upon another the crime of lying, criminales only himself. I must, notwithstanding, do you the justice to say that there is a class of Conference belligerents who have degraded themselves still lower, and whose coarseness of style and vulgarity of slander place them altogether beneath contempt. I am alive to all that the most sensitive disposition could suggest as to the indelicacy of addressing a minister of the Gospel in a style so bold. But, Sir, you may please to bear in mind that honest people naturally feel indignant at being characterized as liars, although it be a Methodist preacher that should honour them with this scandal. You have, moreover, attempted to justify your behaviour by quoting, "Rebuke them sharply," &c. Had you been more familiar with the Apostolical injunctions which, as a minister of the Gospel, are laid upon you, you might have found some difficulty in showing the application of this passage to the present case, or that it is not altogether superseded by another, which requires that you "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father." For such in years, in piety, and in office, are many of the excellent individuals whom you have, from ignorance or something worse, endeavoured to hold up to scorn.

With these preliminaries I shall proceed to business. Your first objection is to the anonymous character of the address. At the time, it was judged inconvenient to insert the names of the committee, to the number of 50 or 60 persons, as

by none but a captious critic would it be made a matter of importance when the president's or other names are notorious, and in general affixed to the documents of the Association, and the names of the Liverpool committee have gone through several of the newspapers. This it is hoped will at least exempt the Association from the imputation of designed concealment.

Your next exception is against the charge of burning of the people's addresses by the Conference; and whilst you frankly acknowledge your own ignorance upon the subject, and that of your advisers, you still take upon yourself to say, "I venture to affirm it is false!" These are somewhat delicate circumstances for a gentleman to be placed in who has any regard for the reputation of authorship. Whatever sentiments you may entertain, the public will feel no surprise that such a disgraceful fact as this should not be recorded in the regular "Minutes," or obtain publicity through the usual Conference channels. Those who are conscious of censurable behaviour are not usually disposed to blazon abroad their own shame, but endeavour rather to erase the very recollection of it. To found an accusation against others upon your own ignorance, Sir will reflect discredit upon nobody's "principles" but your own. If you will refer to No. 3, of the *Watchman's Lantern*, of the 14th January, you may find authorities for this fact quoted, which put the matter beyond a doubt.

You next attempt to pervert the inference (see Address, p. 5,) that the Conference may, if they think proper, alter the doctrines, the discipline, &c. of Methodism. I charge you with *designedly* perverting this inference, because you have dealt with it apart from the facts from which it is drawn. The position maintained in the Address is, that with the absolute power which the Conference have assumed,—in the Leeds case, by arbitrarily setting aside the only check which the people have upon their proceedings, namely, the official meetings; and in the establishment upon their own authority of a Theological Institution, in contempt, or in Jesuitical suppression of public opinion,—they may do just what they please; and I think there is nothing in your wandering explanations of the power of the people to disprove this conclusion. The complaint in the Address, as you must have seen, is not that the laws do not give sufficient power to the people, but that these laws are violated by the Conference with impunity. In *theory* it is admitted that our church government may be popular enough, but in *practice* we maintain it is the most despotic under heaven. In your remarks upon this subject, you have started one or two points which, though not bearing upon the question at issue, I shall briefly notice.

You ask, would not the rule prohibiting the "speaking evil of magistrates or ministers" justify the expulsion from society of any member of the Association? I reply that it became your duty to prove the right of application before you applied this rule. You ought to have shown that it bears any reference at all to Methodist preachers, they being unknown to Mr. Wesley by the denomination of *ministers*; or that it respects any but ministers of state. You ought also to have shown that Methodist preachers are incapable of misconduct; or, that if guilty, they ought not to be reprov'd, after the example of our Lord and his apostles with the Scribes and Pharisees. Further, if "Mr. Wesley's authority will not be questioned," and laws are to be enforced so strictly, methinks the Association would do well to avail themselves of that most important one, which prohibits *smoking* and *drum-drinking*, and so to rid themselves at once, by a sort of clean sweep, of the most distinguished of their opponents in Conference!

Next, with regard to the *Missionary Committees*, I have to observe that these committees, as you must be aware, although you have adduced them to illustrate the power of the people, are completely under the power of Conference, by whom, and not by the people, they are chosen; a circumstance which renders it unimportant whether they consist of preachers or laymen. It is really amusing to follow your mental aberrations on these points. You say, further, "The

admission of laymen to a share in the management of the funds are (is) one of the innovations of modern Methodism, which the United Association, either ignorantly or designedly, actually reprobate!" Where you found this monstrous proposition I cannot tell; certainly not in the Address. This, Sir, if you please, is fiction, "pure" or not pure. As you have professed to be so intimately acquainted with the management of Methodist *funds*, perhaps you can inform the public upon what authority the Conference have appropriated, out of the Contingent Fund, subscribed, as you know, for very different objects, £100, which, it appears, is to be paid annually, for the purpose of sending out emissaries to Canada? or what is the object of the transfer of 600 guineas per annum, during the last two years, from the Missionary to the Contingent Fund, so as to make the balance of the latter, this year, creditor to the extraordinary extent of £2100; or whether this has any connexion with the preparation of an illegitimate fund for the support of the projected College? Perhaps, also, you can explain the cause of the defalcation in the transferred profits of the Book Room, which a few years ago amounted to £4000, and are now only £1400? A cause there must be: and your pamphlet might have been of some service if, instead of smothering you had attempted to satisfy, inquiry on these important topics.

I next notice your well meant vindication of Mr. Bunting. You have, no doubt, placed that gentleman under considerable obligations to you, by the intrepidity and affection you have displayed in throwing before him the shield of your protection. He will, I dare say, not forget you. But, Sir, I apprehend it is somewhat easier to defend your learned protégé before a packed audience in a Methodist Conference, than before the public. As a theologian and a preacher, Mr. Bunting's talents are indisputably great. It is no more my wish to depreciate these, than it is the private character of this eminent individual. But in reference to Mr. Bunting's Conferential career, and the line of policy by which that career has been distinguished, I have no reserve in expressing the most unqualified condemnation. I think, Sir, the contempt and disregard which that policy has manifested for popular and conventional rights, totally incapacitate any individual who adopts it, for taking part in a free church government. Every member of the Methodist Society is at perfect liberty to applaud or to censure the proceedings of an official man, who, like the gentleman in question, is the paid servant of the Methodist public, and amenable to them for his public behaviour. And, I ask you, Sir, has Methodism ever received a wound so deep or so incurable as those inflicted by such extraordinary proceedings? Was she ever so much humbled before the world, or so depressed in her energies as she has been in consequence of so reckless and ruinous a course of policy? It is, indeed, Sir, remarkable that you should have mentioned the name of Mr. Bunting in such close connexion with that of the revered Wilberforce and the patriotic Earl Grey! Mr. Bunting is not, I believe, ashamed of his political opinions, and these, you must know, run in direct opposition to those of the noble individual you have selected; and how far Mr. Bunting is worthy to be counted a coadjutor in the cause of negro emancipation, his celebrated vote at a Liverpool election may determine.

You charge the Association with abandonment of the funds of Methodism. This, Sir, is misrepresentation. When you wrote this passage, you must have been aware, or your ignorance is unpardonable, that the reason for the recommendation of the Association to withhold these funds is, that some of them are misappropriated. It is further alleged that serious abuses exist, involving the fate of Methodism. The power of withholding the funds is now the only real power the people possess: and, Sir, I call upon you to show that, under the circumstances, a temporary suspension of contributions is either improper or unconstitutional. Those who pay the money, whether it be to their ministers in the shape of salaries, or to any collateral fund, have an undoubted right to be satisfied that it is deserved in the one case, and that it is fairly appropriated in the other;



and this, whatever power the Conference may foolishly imagine to belong to them. You have expressed considerable anxiety that the members of the Association should quit the Society; and state it to be "an act of compassion to acquaint them that the people have the power to emancipate themselves by simply ceasing to be members of the Methodist Society." So much compassion, doubtless, entitles you to our gratitude. But, I beg to assure you, Sir, that although quite aware of what you affect to suppose us ignorant of, it is not our intention to avail ourselves of your kind advice. We feel as much interested, Sir, in all that appertains to Methodism, as it is possible for you to feel. Had we consulted our personal comfort, we might have availed ourselves of that important privilege which the Conference, we acknowledge, have still reserved to the malcontents, namely, "to go about our business!" But, Sir, we will do this only when we can do nothing else,—when our hopes of accomplishing a beneficial reform are less bright, nay, are extinguished. Only imagine, Sir, how the advocates of parliamentary reform would have stared at their friends the Tories had they been addressed (as you and your colleagues have the effrontery to address us) to this effect:—"Gentlemen, we advise you as you are so dissatisfied with the British Government, to transport yourselves. The world is before you; go where you please—only leave us to ourselves." Ah, Sir, your tender mercies are cruel! But you go so far as to say, "If they will not leave us, we must, and will, leave them!" Really I think this is too much for a gentleman to say whose name, when proposed to be invited to a circuit, is the signal for so much opposition in the quarterly meeting. On this subject, however, I have only to remark, that there are Reverend Gentlemen far more distinguished than Mr. Vevers, whose connexion with Methodism has presented more obstacles to its prosperity than the most virulent persecution from the Established Church ever did; and whose retirement would occasion but little regret.

You speak of the introduction of the liturgy "with the consent of the constituted authorities." I think, Sir, you had better not tempt us to a full exposure of the disgraceful proceedings which have, in general, accompanied the unconstitutional and forced introduction of organs and the liturgy into our places of worship. This, however, I leave to your discretion.

Your next effort is to distort the obvious meaning of the "prayer" in the Address, that we have no more "*modern* district meetings." "Why, Sir, did you not quote also the term by which the word "*modern*" was qualified, namely, "*Star Chamber Court*?" I will answer this inquiry myself, by saying that in this view, which is the only one in which special district meetings are objected to, you found them indefensible.

You endeavour to prove that the laws respecting district meetings passed previously to 1795 are not affected by those passed during that year. If the articles in the Plan of Pacification and the Concessions had any design at all, they were intended to abolish ministerial despotism. This, on their own authority, is thus expressed: "Thus, brethren, we have given up the greatest part of our executive government into your hands," &c. But, Sir, to acknowledge in the Conference or in a district meeting the power to interfere with the decision of a local meeting; to set aside its verdict, to support the minority against the majority, and to settle all things as unto them shall seem fit, is despotism; tyranny of the most flagrant description, equally dishonourable to those who endure, and to those who exercise it.

Your next observation which I shall notice is, "That the chief subject which engaged the attention of the Connexion in the year 1795, was not the tyranny of the Conference, but an apprehended departure from the Church of England, manifested by the introduction of the Lord's Supper into our chapels." In reply to this assertion, I cannot forbear alluding to what must have forcibly struck the reader, viz. the extreme ambiguity with which this subject is alluded to. Pray, Sir, do you intend it to be understood that the question of the "people's rights"

had *nothing* to do with the agitation of those periods, when you say it was not the "chief subject" of complaint? And allow me to ask what it is you mean when you proceed to say, "The matters in dispute were not between the Conference and the people, as it is commonly, but very erroneously, if not indeed falsely represented; but chiefly between the people and some trustees, who made their appeal to the Conference." Do you intend to say that "the matters" were, or were not, between the Conference and the people? This is either true or false. You admit the affirmative to be "commonly" though "erroneously represented." If, then, it be erroneously so represented, why should you doubt whether it be falsely represented? If the general opinion be an error, the publication of it must be a falsehood; and yet you put this inference hypothetically! When you doubt your own proposition, whilst you hesitate not to publish it, it is, I think, our turn to exclaim, "How desirable that Mr. Vevers should at least have a little candour, that he may not be justly liable to the charge of disingenuousness!" Your remarks, Sir, on this point, only furnish additional proof of your ignorance of well-known facts, or your intention to misrepresent them.

Notwithstanding that it appears you had not made up your mind at the time that you made the above statements so boldly, I shall mention one or two authorities or facts, which, whilst they may fully confirm the reader in the opinion of the Association, you have so feebly endeavoured to controvert, may also decide your own wavering judgment.

Now, Sir, I admit that it was the intention of the Conference, that after they had submitted the Plan of Pacification in 1795, the people should have nothing else; and that they should have no more discussion, nor make any further demands in reference to the subjects in dispute between the two parties; and, in order to give effect to this their intention, they published, in 1796, a rule which was to put a final stop to the growing dissatisfaction of the public! Only read it, Sir! "Let no man, or number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, till it has been first appointed by Conference." What a Popish production!

The next communication from the Conference is dated Leeds, Aug. 7, 1797, and contained the "Concessions." Upon this, the silence of Mr. Vevers is somewhat mysterious. This communication commences thus:—"Dear Brethren, we think it our duty to inform you, by the earliest opportunity, of the measures we have taken to satisfy those of our brethren who have been made more or less uneasy by *sundry publications circulated through the societies*; and we trust that on a serious consideration of the regulations we have agreed to at this Conference, you will see that the sacrifices in respect to authority, (*authority*, Sir, not the Lord's Supper,) which we have made on the part of the whole body of travelling preachers, evidence our willingness to meet our brethren in every thing which is consistent with the existence of the Methodist discipline." Now, this passage, in the first place, corroborates the evidence contained in the rule of 1796, that certain publications, obnoxious to Conference, were in circulation. 2d, That the topics discussed in them were totally distinct from the question of the Lord's Supper. 3d, That those topics related to ministerial authority, and to discipline. And 4th, That the public interest on these two topics, which was rife in 1795, became formidable in 1796, and was effective in 1797, was (contrary either to your knowledge or inclination) not only a chief subject of dispute, but one so serious and general, as to compel a reluctant though affectedly willing Conference to submit. And pray, Sir, was it on account of a difference in opinion in regard to the Lord's Supper that Mr. Kilham and his followers separated, the sensation produced by which was like the shock of an earthquake to the Connexion?\*" You will, I hope, excuse me, when I take the liberty of recommending you (I do it

\* "For fear of a larger division, the Conference agreed to make considerable sacrifices; the preachers resigning considerable portions of power, respecting temporal matters, division of circuits, receiving and excluding members, the appointment and removal of leaders, stewards, and local preachers."—*Jonathan Crowther's Portraiture of Methodism*, p. 135.

solely out of concern for your character as an author) to study the history and statistics of Methodism before you plunge further into the present controversy.

Again, you say, "It is a monstrous perversion of truth to represent the language of Mr. Pawson as applied to the *Conference*, of which he was one of the most influential members." Pray, Sir, did you ever *read* the address of Mr. Pawson, or that of the Association, (to which you call your production a reply,) wherein the following words of Mr. Pawson are quoted:—"You (the people) have not only built our chapels, but you bear every burden of a temporal kind; why, then, should you be excluded from having a proper share in the government, or, at least, in the regulation, of the church of God? Your leaders being the most intimately acquainted with you, are the most proper to represent you. *If you think it not safe to trust the Conference* (the Conference, Sir, not the Trustees) with your spiritual privileges, then, in the name of the Lord, I entreat you to keep them in your own power." Now, Sir, I appeal to the public, whether you or your opponents are chargeable with this "monstrous perversion of truth?"

You proceed, in the next place, to say,—"*The United Association, (when speaking of the Plan of Pacification of 1795 and the Concessions of 1797,) declare these transactions were regarded in the light of a solemn compact, a principal feature of which was to take out of the hands of the preachers the right of arbitrary expulsion.*" Such is the statement, (you go on to say,) of the authors of the Affectionate Address; but, let the public, especially the members of the Methodist societies, judge of the veracity of this statement, when I add, (and I pledge my own character for the truth of the statement, and, observe, I do not write anonymously,) there is not a single article in the Plan of Pacification,—which consists of two leading articles, headed, 1. Concerning the Lord's Supper, &c., 2. Concerning Discipline,—which either in a direct or indirect manner warrants the statement of the Association."

In alluding to the Methodist constitution, is it not the usual practice to refer to the Plan of Pacification of 1795 and the Concessions of 1797, as, together, forming one treaty? Now, Sir, if you will read the passage in the Address again, you will see that the assertion is not made, as you have thought proper to criticise it, in reference to the Plan of Pacification *separately*; and what meaning you intend to convey by your criticisms of the phrase "clandestine expulsions" found in the very Concessions themselves of 1797, I think your readers must be at a loss to divine. The language of the Concessions is as follows:—"The members of our societies are delivered from every apprehension of clandestine expulsions." If the societies had entertained no apprehension on the subject, why should the Conference congratulate them on being delivered from such apprehension? Surely you do not intend it to be believed that the Conference granted the rule designed to check such arbitrary conduct, solely from the impulse of spontaneous generosity!

Mr. Church, in his celebrated controversy with Mr. Wesley, speaking on the subject of Mr. Wesley's authority, asks, "How, then, will you vindicate all these powers?" Mr. Wesley replies, "All these are declaring those (that is, the members,) are no longer of our Society."\* Thus you see Mr. Wesley regarded the expulsion of members from Society as the highest degree of ecclesiastical power; and when a rule was adopted, at the instance of the delegates, to prevent clandestine expulsion, what impropriety is there, I ask, in saying this concession of power by the Conference constituted a principal feature in the "solemn compact?" But you inquire next,—"*What were the minor, though not trivial claims, that were waived on account of this important concession?*" Do you really mean to insinuate, Sir, that the Conference granted all that was sought from them at this time? Was there nothing said about the management of the Book Room concerns? and, surely, you cannot be so dull as to conceive that the

\* Wesley's Works, Vol. 16, p. 166. Ed. Bristol, 1772.

letter signed by Mr. Longridge, in 1795, had any thing to do with what passed between the delegates and the Conference in 1797!

Notwithstanding your *recent* encomiums upon Mr. Longridge and his party, you yourself, on a former occasion, viewed the insurgents of those times in the same light as the Association does, when you denominated them "the friends of religious liberty,"—"the giants of 1797." And if now, in your remarks upon the men of 1795 you intend to retract your commendations of the delegates of 1797, you convict yourself of a very disreputable piece of tergiversation. I maintain, Sir, in opposition to you, that the reformers of those times were precisely of the same moral character as the reformers of the present day, and just as much deserved the appellation which Mr. McDonald gave them, when he called them a "clamorous faction," as the members of the Association now deserve your invidious epithets and those of your party. I must, however, admit this difference between the two cases, that the "impugners of the Conference" in those days had not such an accumulation of grievances,—such an aggravation of wrong and insult to complain of as we have.

You demand proof that "since those periods (1795 and 1797) many invasions of our rights have been practised by an arbitrary stretch of power on the part of the preachers." I presume you do not wish me to give you a longer list, and I shall content myself with referring for confirmation of the statement in the Address to two instances, one of which is the case of the erection of the organ in Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool; and the other, the introduction of the liturgy into Grosvenor-street Chapel, Manchester; proceedings which, at the time, threatened the dissolution of the societies in those places; detailed accounts of which will, probably, soon appear in the periodical through which I now address you.

Your charge against the "United Association" for demanding both the "vote by ballot" and an "open Conference," which I come now to notice, is not founded in the truth of the case. And thus, Sir, in your haste to fix reproach upon others, you have fastened it upon yourself; and, in your zeal to convict the members of the Association of stupidity and lying, you are taken in your own net: for the whole affair, upon which you have lavished so much envenomed acrimony, it seems, has arisen simply from your readers having placed too much confidence in *your veracity*. The contradictory propositions, Sir, were contained in the resolutions of the *Quarterly Meeting of the Manchester First Circuit*, the last adjournment of which was held on the 3d of November, and the error was detected before the Association was *formed*, which was not until the 7th idem;\* and I am at liberty, Sir, to challenge you, notwithstanding your vain-glorious tirade, to point out the rule in the constitution of the Association which recognised this "absurdity." So that the honour which you claim to yourself for having first made the discovery belongs, after all, to the very men whose folly you had placed in such flattering juxtaposition with your own sagacity! And so far, I am happy to say, that if the promoters of the Association happen to get into difficulties, they can extricate themselves without your assistance.†

The motives which prompted your splenetic but harmless invectives against the advocacy of that principle of improvement which has already gone so far in

\* The Report of which was published in the *Christian Advocate* of the 10th Nov.

† These two "contradictory propositions," though included in the resolutions of the quarterly meeting of the Manchester First Circuit, are not to be found in those passed at the formation of the Association, the proposal for the vote by ballot having been withdrawn, principally at the instance of the Liverpool delegates. Nor are they both included in the first address of the Association, published at Liverpool. The second address of the Association, published at Manchester, contains both propositions, the author of which address had based his observations upon the resolutions of the quarterly meeting alluded to, instead of those of the Association; and this address having been *printed* before it was submitted to the Liverpool friends, the proposal for the vote by ballot, though objected to, was not thought to be of so much importance as to require the alteration to be made then: but when Mr. Vevers wrote his first Appeal he criticised the resolutions of the *quarterly meeting*, and yet blamed the Association for them!—For the *Christian Advocate's* reply to Mr. Vevers on this topic, see that paper of the 12th Jan.



the purification of public bodies, and to which the reverend monopoly, whose champion you have become, must, notwithstanding their turbulent resistance, eventually submit, are sufficiently evident. As the interested advocate of a despotical priesthood, your zealous attack upon the great principle of reform, and its various and irresistible supporters, will be matter of surprise to none. I must, however, remark, that your endeavours to cast upon Methodist reformers the stigma of being auxiliaries to infidelity, only betrays your ignorance or concealment of an historical fact, which fixes the blame of the infidelity of the world, not upon the promoters of civil and religious liberty, but upon the ambition and corruption of the Christian ministry! It was, Sir, the reign of Papal tyranny that preceded and introduced the "Reign of Terror" in revolutionary France.

The next topic to which I shall advert is the *Methodist Magazine*, the conductors of which were charged in the Address with diverting that publication from its legitimate channel; with attempts to depreciate the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke, than whom, next to Mr. Wesley, the memory of no individual is so sacredly cherished and beloved by the Methodist people; with invidious aspersions of Mr. Samuel Drew; and, finally, with being not the representative of the sentiments of the "body" on these and other topics, but of an unpopular, jealous, and ambitious party. And what do you say about all this? Not a word. You enlarge upon "the rich variety of its biographical accounts; its sound divinity; its rich and instructive variety of miscellaneous matters; and its immense mass of missionary intelligence." Now, Sir, although it is a painful fact that some, even of these things, are considered to have miserably deteriorated, this charge was not brought forward against the *Methodist Magazine*; the charges in the Address were of another description; such, Sir, as you had not the courage to descant upon, and from which you probably thought it more convenient to divert the attention of your readers. And is it not a most offensive and intolerable insult, for the servants of the Methodist public to turn round and abuse their constituents in a magazine supported by the subscriptions of that public, as they do when they treat of "low dissent," and commit the "Body" to one side of a political question? Are the Conference prepared to show that Mr. Wesley, with all his attachment for the Church of England, ever pleaded the necessity or utility of its union with the State? He could not, Sir, if the following quotation has any weight:—

"I have, (he says) been long convinced, from the whole tenor of ancient history, that this very event, Constantine's calling himself a Christian, and pouring forth that flood of wealth and honour on the Christian church, the clergy, in particular, was productive of more evil to the church than all the Ten persecutions put together. From the time that power, riches, and honour, of all kinds, were heaped upon the Christians, vice of all kinds came in like a flood, both on the clergy and laity. From the time that the Church and State, the kingdoms of Christ and of the world, were so strangely and unnaturally blended together, Christianity and heathenism were so thoroughly incorporated with each other, that they will hardly ever be divided till Christ comes to reign upon earth."\*

Without at all entering into the merits of the argument for preserving the union of Church and State, it is clear that Mr. Wesley's authority had very little to do with the motives which have induced the Conference to turn politicians. Could any thing, then, be more impertinent or disingenuous than for the Conference so to misrepresent the motives of those who differ from them on this subject—pointing them out to derision, as if they had been inimical to the *prosperity* of the Church of England, when, like Mr. Wesley, they denounce only that union which, in his opinion, is the source of its corruption? I do not now advocate the dissolution of that union; I am merely desirous to vindicate from the impudent aspersions of men who ought to know better, the character of those who conscientiously think such a dissolution desirable.

It is my intention, Sir, to resume this discussion on an early occasion.

Liverpool, February 12, 1835.

SCRUTATOR.

\* *Vide Wesley's Sermons, (on Former Times,) vol. i, p. 569.*

## PROCEEDINGS IN MANCHESTER.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—The expulsion of Dr. Warren from his pulpits, in the Manchester First Circuit, was designed not only to silence him but to stop at once the progress of Methodistical reform; but such was the shortsightedness of our opponents, that that and other unconstitutional measures subsequently adopted, have mightily accelerated the cause of Christian liberty, and instead of the Doctor, and a few veteran local brethren who espoused his cause, being unemployed, as was intended, the claims upon their services have greatly multiplied. Chapels, schools, rooms, &c. are being opened in all directions, which we deem it indispensable to occupy, principally for the following reasons:—1st. The Great Head of the church, “having inwardly moved us to take upon us this office and ministry,” and pronounced an awful woe if we disobey, we dare not, at the bidding of any man, or set of men, on earth, be silent; we, therefore, proceed, in the name, and by the authority, of Christ, into these providential doors of usefulness, and preach to listening thousands the unsearchable riches of Christ: but, secondly, we are driven by stress of circumstances to this line of conduct. Many of our preachers, by their unmethodistical and tyrannical conduct, in trying and expelling from Society, by laws long since abrogated, and in meetings illegally constituted, many of our best and most useful officers, have given just cause of offence to numbers of our leaders, members, and hearers, who declare they cannot profit under the ministry of men who appear to value a college more than precious and immortal souls, and who dare cut off at a stroke any man or number of men who, impelled by conscience, will dare to oppose them in their unconstitutional and reckless career. The spirit evinced by some of these men, appointed to minister in holy things, and who are not to lord it over God’s heritage, but to be examples to the flock, has induced many to quit the Methodist ministry to seek the teachings of men whose spirit and example agree with their spiritual and responsible calling. One Manchester superintendent, whose name and doings are immortalized, attributes our rational and scriptural attempts at reformation to Satanic agency, and when, in two instances, two Christian brethren professed how happy they felt in our meetings, and how specially the spirit of God was present, vociferated “The spirit of God!—the spirit of the devil was there.” For a moment allow me to digress, by remarking that this bigoted, unchristian, persecuting spirit, a spirit which, thank God, is bounded by British law, or we should again witness the scenes of martyrdom through which our forefathers passed to glory;—this same spirit is tolerated in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*. Wesleyan Methodists, throughout the Connexion, let patience have its perfect work, while you listen to the ruling junto’s humble declaration, “That persons should openly profess these abominations, (that is, the principles of the Association,) and yet profess allegiance to Christ, and talk of communion with him, is as downright fanaticism as would be the attempt to unite practical Christianity with drunkenness, or with cursing and swearing.”—*Magazine* for Jan. 11, p. 37. May God forgive them, for they know not what they do.

What, then, I inquire, were we to do in such circumstances? The chapels and preaching houses in which such men conducted the public

worship of Almighty God are forsaken by very many who were wont to worship among us. Numbers of these were beginning to attend other places of religious worship; and, alas! not a few, we fear, have been turned out of the way by these under shepherds of the House of Israel. As *true Wesleyan Methodists*, we were anxious to retain the souls whom God had given us, and therefore said to them, "Come with us, and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Thank God, the invitation has been promptly and extensively embraced; and wherever we proclaim the word of this salvation, the places are crowded to excess by attentive and unpressed audiences. The people are exchanging boxes of whistles for vocal music, "singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord;" forms of prayer for heart worship, "praying with the Spirit and with the understanding also;" and splendid chapels for houses, garrets, and even factories. A large room in one of these last was opened last Sabbath in the Manchester Third Circuit. A prayer meeting was held in the morning, attended by about two hundred. In the forenoon Dr. Warren preached with power and with the Holy Ghost to eleven or twelve hundred people; and about six or eight hundred, who could not gain admittance, were addressed by a blind man, a local brother, out of doors. A love feast was held in the afternoon, which was crowded almost to suffocation; and about four or five hundred without were addressed by Mr. Barlow, of the Bridgewater-street Circuit. In the evening Mr. David Rowland, from Liverpool, delivered an able and impressive sermon to as many as could gain admission; and, what was very remarkable, although the night was dark, and cold, and rather wet, hundreds remained without, apparently resolved to worship God as near to us as possible. The blind brother who had so much interested them in the forenoon ascended an upper room in the same building, and conducted, with the assistance of brother Hughes, the unusual and interesting service. Truly this was altogether "new in Methodism;" and, (but tell it not,) do you know, we dared to do so without the "consent of Conference!" We had a glorious field-day: the ranks of our opponents were amazingly thinned, their power mightily diminished, and our own forces greatly augmented and inspirited. The services were crowned with special tokens of the Divine favour; and fifteen or sixteen professed to have found peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The forenoon and evening collections were nearly twenty-three pounds.

One thought more and I have done. The preachers and their party charge us now with being schismatics, revolutionists, anti-Methodists, seceders, &c. We disown and disclaim this charge altogether. We are, or would be, primitive Christians, scriptural followers of John Wesley, conservators of Methodism. Our intention is not to divide and scatter, but to collect and preserve. Our reply to this charge is,—While you are scattering, we are gathering; when you say go, we say come; while you are driving, we are drawing; while you are emptying, we are filling; and if He "whose we are and whom we serve" spare and bless us until Conference, we design to say, "Here are we, and the souls whom God has given us; concede the just, the rational, the scriptural claims which we urge, and we will be one fold under one shepherd."

Yours, in Christ,

JOHN GREENHALGH.

## PROCEEDINGS AT LIVERPOOL.

TRIAL AND EXPULSION OF MESSRS. COLE, BRIDSON, CHRISTIAN, AND MORGAN,  
CONNECTED WITH PITT-STREET CHAPEL.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—As you have inserted in the *Lantern* accounts of the expulsions which have taken place at the other chapels in Liverpool, I take the liberty of sending you a few particulars respecting the trials and expulsions of several persons belonging to Pitt-street Chapel. No doubt, it will be considered strange that nothing decisive has transpired there before this time, there having been a great number of names belonging to that chapel signed to the celebrated "Declaration" in the newspapers, which has given so much umbrage to the ministers who broke the rule respecting the pulpit not being allowed to be made the vehicle of abuse, &c. However, those brethren connected with Pitt-street received notice, previous to the 11th December, that a charge would be preferred against them for being members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association. As Messrs. Cole and Bridson were considered the greatest sinners, being announced as the treasurer and secretary of the Association, they were to be immediately proceeded against; whilst the others were to hold themselves in readiness until the judge and his legal advisers thought proper to call them to appear. Mr. Bridson attended on the 11th December, when the Rev. George Marsden gave a long harangue on the proceedings of the Association, and its tendency to divide the societies; and particularly alluded to the Declaration made at the formation of the Association, as to "No honest man, &c.,"—but more especially to what the committee had thought proper to insert in a newspaper, charging the preachers with being liars, &c. There was much discussion, and, after eleven o'clock, Mr. Bridson's trial was postponed a week, to see if any other means could be adopted to bring about a reconciliation between the parties, without expulsion, it being rumoured that a meeting of preachers had been held in Manchester to devise such a plan. Mr. Bridson, not being a member of the meeting, was prevented saying any thing, and was determined to leave himself entirely at the disposal of the meeting.

On the 18th of December, the trustees having been summoned on account of Mr. Cole's trial, he was proceeded against, and, after much debate, a vote was taken upon the rule of 1796, when, in a meeting of upwards of forty persons, there were not ten who held up their hands as to its being broken. It being past eleven o'clock when the meeting broke up, Mr. Cole was allowed a week to make up his mind. The following Thursday being Christmas day, Mr. Cole's sentence was again deferred. On the 1st of January, he and Mr. Bridson appeared in the vestry, when, after some further conversation, Mr. Cole was declared to be no longer a member of the Methodist Society. Mr. Bridson and the other brethren were told that proceedings would not be immediately taken against them, in order that they might have a further opportunity of withdrawing from the Association.\*

On the 12th January, brothers Christian, Morgan, Martin, and Bridson were summoned to attend a leaders' meeting, and, as they had not quitted the Association, were forthwith proceeded against. The Rev. George Marsden commenced as before respecting the Association, and stated that upwards of 800 preachers had declared their attachment to Methodism, and condemned the Association; that all the gentlemen connected with the finances had also done the same; that the efforts of the Association, in most parts of the kingdom, had been frustrated,

\* The sentence pronounced upon Mr. Cole caused a great sensation. The Chairman having concluded the meeting, a protest was read, and several brethren proceeded to sign it, when Mr. M. Ashton, as trustee, warned them off the premises, and much confusion ensued. It was stated that Mr. Ashton, by his officiousness, had done more for the Association than any other man in Liverpool.



and that it was dying away; and that he had hoped the brethren belonging to Pitt-street would have followed the example of brother Gardiner, and withdrawn. He had received a letter, some time ago, from brother Howson, written, he said, in a very Christian spirit, containing a notice of his withdrawal from the Methodist Society, and accompanied by his class book; but he was not aware at the time that brother Howson had also sent in his resignation to the Chairman of the Association. He had, however, received another letter that morning from brother Howson, stating that, at the time his former letter was written, he had also given in his resignation to the Association, and begged that he might be again received amongst them. As this letter was also written in such a *Christian* spirit, he (Mr. Marsden) could see no reason why he should not be reinstated; and he hoped the brethren would see proper to follow him, and give up the Association: if not, there was no alternative. He then called over the names of the parties, Messrs. Christian, Morgan, Martin, and Bridson, and asked them severally to renounce the Association.

When Mr. Bridson was asked, he requested to know who had charged him with being a member, when the Chairman said that it was a mere technicality, and wished him to say whether he renounced the Association.

Mr. BRIDSON.—Who charges me?

Mr. M. ASHTON said this was a mere quibble, and appeared very uneasy: however, Mr. Bridson insisted upon his accuser being named, when Mr. Ashton said, "I accuse you."

Mr. BRIDSON then acknowledged that he was a member, and went on to state that he did not intend to make a long defence; that his opinions were not hastily taken up; that he had been a member of society nearly thirteen years, and that his conduct was known to his brethren around him, but that the preachers knew little or nothing of him; and that his appearance there as a private member was not the fault of others, as he would not, under existing circumstances, appear in any other character. He had been connected with various committees, especially those of the Sunday Schools, and he was convinced that Methodism would not work well unless there were more power in the local meetings.

Mr. CHRISTIAN was asked to state his sentiments, when he demanded to know how he was to be tried,—whether as a member of that meeting?

Mr. MARSDEN.—As a member of society.

Mr. CHRISTIAN.—As an official member?

Mr. MARSDEN.—As a member of society.

Mr. CHRISTIAN said it was no use saying any thing: he had been in the society thirty-four years, thirty-two of which he had been a leader, and they could not bring any charge against him.

Mr. MARTIN stated the number of years he had been a member; that he had a class given him, consisting of thirteen members,—three left at that time; he had now sixty, and only one was with him now that was given him at first; he could not at present see his way clear. Mr. Marsden was acquainted with his sentiments from the private conversations he had with him.

Mr. MORGAN stated that he had considered the subject, and upon joining the Association he had made up his mind: he had been a member of society thirty-nine years, twenty-seven of which he had been a leader; he had been thirty years a visitor of the Strangers' Friend Society; that he had distributed tracts from the first of their being introduced into Liverpool, and had gone from ship to ship in the docks for that purpose, and was now a tract distributor.

Mr. MARSDEN then asked if the brethren had any thing further to say, and proceeded to state that there was some discrimination to be made, especially with regard to Brother Martin, to whom he should not say any thing, as he appeared not to have fully made up his mind; but as the other brethren appeared determined,

unless they declared their resignation of the Association, before the meeting was closed, they could not be considered any longer members of society. He then called upon the Rev. J. Dixon to pray, when

Brother BENNION stood forward and protested against this proceeding, and said that numbers of the brethren were equally guilty, and requested that he might be expelled with them.

Brother THORP.—There are few persons who will say that the Association is Methodistical. Yet I cannot but think, Sir, that the measures which are adopted to repress it are equally as illegal as the Association itself, and whatever may be the present consequences, I believe they will in the end be the means of obtaining that for which the Association sprung into being; that is, free discussion in, and the impartial decision of, the local meetings. I am firmly persuaded that, had these two things existed, and been acted upon, there never would have been such a thing as the Wesleyan Methodist Association. I am perfectly satisfied, Sir, that many of the persons connected with the Association are of the excellent of the earth, and that what they have done they have done from principle, and in the fear of the Lord. I look around me, Sir, and see many whom I have the honour to call brethren, and an honour I feel it, Sir, because I am persuaded they are the sons of God, and are acting with a single eye to his glory. It is true, Sir, they are holding different opinions to yourself, as it regards church discipline, or I might say, rather, as it regards the interpretation and application of the existing laws of Methodism. The conduct of the officers of the Pitt-street Society has always proved them to be lovers of peace; on subjects less vital than the present they have also been “easy to be entreated,” and could they now, Sir, meet your views, without making shipwreck of a good conscience, you would find them yielding as the air; but being fully persuaded in their own minds that wrong measures have been adopted, and that wrong measures are still adopted, with our local meetings, they have dared to declare their opinions, and to seek that which they believe to be their right, leaving events to God. The rule by which my brethren are being expelled, whether it retains all the power with which it was at first invested or not, I do not consider it a sufficient rule for their expulsion, either in the sight of God or man; I do not think it will justify any man in cutting off from the church these holy brethren,—men of character unimpeached and unimpeachable—men who have spent (some of them, at least,) many years in the service of God, in the voluntary and laborious service of winning souls to Christ, and watching over them. I read in my class-book that in 1797 there was a resolution passed to the following effect:—“No person must be expelled from the society for any breach of our rules, or even for manifest immorality, till such fact or crime has been proved at a leaders’ meeting.” Now, if there be any meaning in words, this resolution, to say the least of it, gives every man to understand, who takes a common sense view of it, that no rules have an equal, much less superior power to these in the class books, because these are given into our hands by the Conference as “the most material.\*” If even the rule of 1796 was allowed to prove the guilt of a brother, I think common honesty demands that the rule of 1797 should be allowed to award the measure of censure inflicted upon that brother; and, Sir, while I thus see law trampled on, and justice disregarded, I cannot do otherwise than protest against the illegal expulsion of brethren whom I love in the Lord, and for their work’s sake, and beg you would unite me with them when you pronounce the sentence, as I am equally guilty with themselves, being, from conscientious motives, a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Association.

Mr. J. MARTIN said he wished to fall with his brethren.

\* The rules printed in the class-books are not all the rules of the society; they do not even contain the Plan of Pacification, and it is to be regretted that the rules printed in 1797 are now out of print.

Mr. DIXON then stated that such a state of things could not continue ; whether they were members of Society or not, unless there was a division of the parties he would not be their preacher. Two of the most sensible men in the Association (he alluded to Messrs. Farrer and Howson) had admitted that the Association and Methodism could not exist together. The most honest and straightforward way would be to divide, and those who were of the Association to stand on one side, and the remainder on the other, which was the way Mr. Wesley did when there were disputes in the society.

Mr. MARSDEN said, in allusion to the remarks of Mr. Thorp respecting the piety of the parties who were opposed to them, he had not said any thing respecting their difference of opinion on church government affecting that ; he had no doubt there were many pious and sensible men in the New Connexion, and others, again, who were desirous of a settled ministry ; and, after repeating what he said respecting the expulsion of the brethren, he called upon Mr. Dixon to pray.

January 29, 1835.

J. B.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—As the last words of dying men, especially if they have been good men, are often noticed and particularly attended to, I take the liberty to send you some of the last words of that truly great and good man, the late Joseph Benson, as committed to writing by our present superintendent, George Marsden, in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1821, page 297 :—

“He expressed (to Mr. and Mrs. Bulwer) his solicitude for the prosperity of the work of God in the Methodist Connexion, and said there was danger chiefly from three sources, *the love of riches, the love of honour, the love of POWER*. He hoped the preachers would be very *tender* of the cause of God, and that they would seek nothing but the *good* of souls.”

If you think the above few words worthy a place in the *Watchman's Lantern*, they are at your service.—The date is Sunday, January 28, 1821.

Liverpool, Feb. 1835.

Your's,

J. B.

#### MORE TESTIMONY AS TO THE BURNING OF THE ADDRESSES.

##### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—As the statement respecting the burning of the people's addresses, after Mr. Wesley's death, has been contradicted by several of the Reverend advocates of “things as they are,” and as it appears to me an important fact, illustrating the habitual contempt with which remonstrance, on the part of the people, is treated by the Conference, I beg to transmit you the following additional testimony on this subject :—It is to be found in a small pamphlet printed by Aston, Manchester, in February, 1807, entitled the “Detector Detected, or a Refutation of the Assertions contained in a Pamphlet entitled ‘False Balances Detected.’” I rather think it is a scarce one. Its author anonymous. Speaking of an assertion made by the author of “False Balances Detected,” that “*All letters which are regularly sent to the Conference from the Quarterly meeting of any circuit, will be read and fully considered, which may answer every valuable end of delegates, without the expense or difficulty attending them,*” the author of the “Detector Detected” says, “I shall endeavour to elucidate this part of the subject by a similar argument, namely,—assertion ! *Letters which have been regularly sent to the Conference from quarterly meetings, instead of being ‘read and fully considered,’ have been publicly burned without being read, or in the least attended to ; these disgraceful acts are not recorded in the printed rules, pacific plans or regulations, but they are imprinted in the memories of thousands in the Methodist Connexion ; and I APPEAL TO THE PREACHERS THEMSELVES FOR A CONFIRMATION OF THIS ASSERTION.*”

I am yours, &c.

Manchester, Jan. 25, 1835.

G——.

## WESLEYAN REFORMATION.

Of late it has been industriously circulated by the preachers that the agitation in the societies is gradually subsiding,—that it is only kept up by a few discontented individuals, but that the great majority of the people, tired of strife and turmoil, are gradually seceding from the Association. The cry is, therefore, that a re-action is taking place. That conscientious members of a religious community should avoid, to the utmost of their power, all connexion with strife and contention, is extremely natural; but when once their eyes are opened, and they become so fully awake to the evils around them as to unite and associate for the purpose of removing them, to suppose, under these circumstances, that, having once put their hands to the plough, they will draw back and quietly sit down, whilst scarcely an effort has been made to obtain their just demands, is either dreaming folly or blind ignorance. It is “the wish that is parent to the thought.” If we look around us into the state of the Methodist Societies, where do we descry the semblance of a re-action? Is it in the public meetings which are almost daily being held in various parts of the country to form associations and communicate information on subjects connected with Methodist reform? Is it in the declarations of trustees, deprecatory of the proceedings of the Conference, which are weekly being issued? Is it in the accessions almost daily made to the ranks of the Association? Is it in the almost universal and eager demand for information on the present all-absorbing topics connected with Methodist discipline? Or has it any existence at all except in the distempered imagination of those who are blind because they will not see,—who, with all their discernment, cannot read “the signs of the times?” No; as well may we expect the effect to take place without the cause,—as soon may we attempt to

“Wailow naked in December’s snow,  
By thinking on fantastic summer’s heat,”

as by trumpeting forth to the world that a re-action is taking place, to anticipate its occurrence without removing the grievances. Do our opponents really wish a re-action to take place; are they, in good faith, anxious to restore peace to the societies? We will tell them how it may be effected, and “without the sacrifice of any principle worth a rush.” We do not ask them to grant at once, and without inquiry, all that the people demand; but let them at least condescend to meet us on something like terms of equality. Let them suspend that tone of lordly contempt and insolent defiance which they have hitherto assumed; let a spirit, partaking in some degree of conciliation and amity be displayed; let the people see their preachers more anxious to promote the usefulness of their ministerial office than their own personal dignity and importance, and we will pledge ourselves that no very severe terms will be exacted from them,—that they will not be required to give up one iota of influence, one tittle of power, which would in the least degree impair their acceptability as preachers, or their usefulness as pastors.

The system at present adopted is summarily to put out every man, whatever be his standing in society, his piety, or usefulness, who has the manliness openly to assert his sentiments, and then, when surrounded solely by their own sycophants, when, at any sacrifice, the voice of complaint is temporarily hushed, we are told that a re-action has taken place. Well may it be said, “They make a wilderness and call it conquest, they create a desert and call it peace.” The storm may rage around, the ocean may be lashed into waves, which, if not calmed in time, may engulf all that is valuable and desirable in our institutions; but so long as the stillness of stagnation reigns in their own little turbid pool, they are content and satisfied. May they

“Be wise to-day, ’tis madness to defer!”

But we must stop, having been led further than we anticipated. Our intention was merely to give our readers a little information as to the progress of the work of reformation.

*Bury.*—(*Lancashire.*)—We understand that J. R. Kay, Esq. a highly respectable gentleman, to whom Methodism is under great obligations for the very liberal pecuniary, and other assistance, afforded in aid of the cause, has been expelled by the superintendent preacher, for circulating the “Affectionate Address” of the Association. We shall be glad to receive the particulars for insertion in the *Lantern*.



**Oldham.**—A public meeting of the Association was held here on the 3d instant, the particulars of which have not reached us.

**Northwich.**—A public meeting was held here on Friday evening, January 30, in the Independent Chapel. The superintendent preacher, Mr. Sugden, the Rev. J. Jackson, and some of their supporters, offered considerable interruption to the proceedings, but were speedily put down by the general indignation of the audience. Dr. Warren and Mr. Greenhalgh from Manchester, Mr. Thompson of Northwich, and other friends severally addressed the audience; and the meeting separated at a late hour, much interested with the proceedings of the evening.

**Hull.**—A public meeting of the Association was held at the Tabernacle, Sykes-street, Hull, on Wednesday evening, February 11. The building, although a spacious one, was densely crowded in every part, and vast numbers were obliged to go away unable to gain admission. The meeting was addressed by Mr. D. Rowland of Liverpool, Mr. Lees of Manchester, and the Rev. Dr. Warren, who was enthusiastically received. It is our intention, if possible, next week to give our readers an abstract of the proceedings at this very interesting meeting.

Public meetings are in contemplation at Oswestry, Nottingham, Skipton, Carlisle, Whitehaven, and Douglas, Isle of Man.

**Birmingham.**—A spirited movement is taking place here, and we hope soon to be able to communicate to our readers some pleasing intelligence.

**Melton Mowbray.**—A little time ago the Rev. James Bromley was sent for by the friends in Melton Mowbray to preach an anniversary sermon. Handbills were printed and distributed, and notes sent to the chapels in Nottingham for announcement. On the Sunday morning previous, a person was sent to tear down the bills from the walls of the chapel, and the notes of a nouncement were refused to be read from the pulpits!

**New Basford, near Nottingham.**—The whole of the class leaders in this place, seven local preachers out of ten, and one hundred and twenty out of one hundred and forty-two members of society belong to the Wesleyan Methodist Association. Let other places imitate the example of New Basford, and the work of reformation will soon be complete.

**London.**—Considerable excitement, we understand, exists at present in the Methodist societies in London, and something decisive, it is expected, will be done before long. There has been a great demand for the *Lantern*, and the other publications of the Association.

**Glasgow.**—A meeting was held in Glasgow on the 22d December, Mr. John Hutton, in the chair, when an association was regularly organized, and a series of resolutions passed. It is intended shortly to hold a public meeting.

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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The account of the trial of Mr. Stubbs, and consequent proceedings at Pitt-street Chapel, Liverpool, shall be inserted in our next.

The account of the late extraordinary proceedings in reference to the Sunday and day schools in Liverpool, and the appeal of the Sunday School Committee, shall have an early insertion.

We have to apologize to Mr. R. B. Grindrod for the unavoidable delay in the insertion of the continuation of his address.

The communication from Skipton will be acceptable. We shall be glad to receive it soon.

We have received a very interesting account of the trial and expulsion of Mr. J. F. Davidson, local preacher in the Liverpool North Circuit, which we shall insert as early as possible.

Mr. Buckley's communication came to hand too late for insertion this week. We wish our correspondents, once for all, to understand, that in consequence of the increasing demand for the *Lantern*, it is necessary for us to go to press several days previous to the date of publication. It is, therefore, impossible to give insertion to any matter which does not arrive at least a week previously.

The letter of L. W. and several other articles, prepared in type, are unavoidably postponed.

We have also to acknowledge *A Lover of Peace and Justice*, Liverpool, and letters from Winchester Birmingham, Derby, and Nottingham.

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Subscriptions will be received by W. SMITH, Esq. (the Chairman) Reddish-house, near Stockport; W. WOOD, Esq. Newton-street, Manchester; at the Offices of the Association, Manchester and Liverpool; and by the Officers and Committee of any Branch Association.

Agents are wanted in most of the Circuit Towns, for the sale of the "Watchman's Lantern," and the other publications of the Association. Applications, (post paid) to be made as above.

# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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**No. 8.**      **WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25, 1835.**      **Price 1½d.**

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## THE LATE MEETING AT HULL.

In our last number we promised this week to notice the late meeting of the Association at Hull more at length. We now proceed to redeem our pledge. For some time past considerable excitement has prevailed in the Methodist Society in that place. A number of leaders and official characters, dissatisfied with the recent proceedings of the Conference and its agents, wished to express their sentiments in the legal and Methodistical mode; and, supposing that the paternal ear of the Conference was always open to receive any humble petition, when emanating from the recognised source, the quarter day, accordingly brought forward a series of resolutions at their last quarterly meeting, expressive of their sentiments. Their superintendent preacher, the Rev. W. Clegg, a gentleman deservedly respected for the urbanity of his manners and his kindness of disposition, but acting, no doubt, under authority, and having the fear of the President's gagging letter before his eyes, refused to put the motion to the vote. That our readers may judge what the resolutions were, which were deemed anti-Methodistical, and improper to be discussed at a regular society meeting, we here insert them:—

"That this meeting views with feelings of deep sorrow and alarm the unsettled state of many of the societies in different parts of the Connexion, and regards it as a solemn duty of the Conference, as well as the people, to ascertain, if possible, the causes of this disorganization of the body, with a view to effect such remedial measures as shall put an end to strife and discord, and restore confidence and brotherly affection between the Conference and the people.

"That it is the opinion of this meeting, that until some measures of a comprehensive and healing nature shall be adopted to remedy these evils, the Connexion will continue in a disorganized and divided state,—the work of God impeded,—and the peace and spiritual prosperity of many of our members endangered, if not destroyed.

"That, entertaining these opinions, this meeting most respectfully begs leave to impress upon the Conference the necessity of revising and amending such of the laws as are worded with "an undesigned ambiguity and want of explanatory amplification," and of re-considering such of their decisions upon the constitution of the laws as have occasioned agitation and discontent in several districts of the Connexion; presenting to the people, in this work of reconciliation, an example of Christian moderation and affection, and affording to them the assurance of a desire to promote their reasonable wishes, and maintain their just rights."

Not being permitted to propose, for the adoption of the quarterly meeting, resolutions of this moderate character, the leaders and officers who held these opinions considered it their duty, at the present crisis, to give publicity to their sentiments, in some way, particularly as resolutions of an opposite character, where it has been possible to obtain them, either openly or clandestinely, have been ostentatiously published and trumpeted forth with all the pomp and circumstance which a Methodist Magazine or a Conference newspaper could invest them with; a meeting was accordingly resolved upon, and advertisements and placards were issued to give it all the requisite publicity. This, of course, kindled the ire of the preachers and their party, and every means were made use of to prevent their members attending the meeting. Amongst other schemes, a report was industriously circulated that Dr. Warren, although invited and pledged to attend, would not be present. The intended meeting was denounced from the pulpits of the various chapels, the people being urged not to attend, and in some instances these warnings were enforced after the administration of the Lord's Supper. The Reformers, however, were on the alert. On Wednesday Dr. Warren

arrived in Hull, and within an hour after his arrival placards were posted, in all directions, with the simple words, in large characters, DR. WARREN HAS ARRIVED. We are informed that the interest excited was prodigious. Persons were admitted by ticket only,—members of the society showing their society tickets. The Tabernacle, in Sykes-street, where the meeting was held, a very spacious building, was densely crowded in every part, and vast numbers went away, unable to obtain admission. Several of the itinerant preachers were present. Previous to the commencement of the meeting a most disingenuous attempt was made by the preachers' party to gain possession of the platform, in imitation, we suppose, of their confraternity at Leeds. The committee, however, were fully prepared for this manœuvre; being deprived of the privileges of Methodistical law, they obtained the assistance of the law of the land; a few police officers, stationed to preserve order, soon put all to rights.

Mr. R. KNIGHT, of Hull was called to the chair, and after singing and prayer the proceedings commenced by the following address from Mr. D. ROWLAND, of Liverpool.

"I assure you, Mr. Chairman, and this very large and interested audience, that it is with mingled feelings of pleasure and of pain that I appear before you on this occasion. Believe me, it gives me sincere pleasure once more to visit a town where, not long ago, God was pleased of his great mercy to bestow upon my humble ministry some seals, some fruit of my labour, (hear, hear,) and to see present now numerous friends, whose piety, intelligence, and zeal I witnessed at that period. I said that this occasion was one of pain as well as of pleasure. Why, Sir, to expose the delinquencies of any person, under any circumstances, is never pleasant; but when we are called upon, by imperative duty, to expose the misconduct of Christian ministers, it cannot but be indescribably distressing to every well regulated and pious mind. (Hear.) Painful and distressing, however, as that duty is, it is the situation in which we are placed on the present occasion. In obedience to *your* call—the call of the Wesleyan Methodists of this town—I, in company with my esteemed friends, appear before this large assembly to-night in the discharge of this most onerous, most painful, most distressing duty. Appearing so before you, I think you will have reason to conclude that we are not amongst those who shrink from the post of duty, even though it may be the post of danger. (Hear, hear.) We have—I regret it exceedingly—we have to prefer serious charges against the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. (A voice, 'The Association.') I will distinctly, at the outset of my observations, state two or three of those grave and solemn charges we have to prefer against that body. The first is this, that they have violated the faith of a solemn treaty. (Shouts of 'No' and 'Yes,' with loud cheers and much interruption.) We have to charge them with having invaded and trampled under foot the local authorities of Methodism. (Hear, hear.) We charge them with having perpetrated deeds of cruel and relentless persecution. We charge them with having assumed an odious, anti-Scriptural, and Popish power. (Great cheering and interruption.) Serious charges these—('Ay, but they are not true,' and renewed cries that those interrupting should be turned out; during which the Rev. John M'Owan, from the gallery, essayed to speak, but the clamour continued; we understood him to say there should be no interruption until the conclusion)—charges which, if we did not feel ourselves in a condition to prove, even to demonstration, we should be exposed, and justly, to the censure of all reasonable men; but, on the other hand, if we make them out, I really think it is only due, in all fairness and candour, when we appear in so responsible a situation, to prefer charges of such serious character, involving such serious consequences, I think it is only due, in common courtesy, that we should be heard whilst making them out. (Hear.) I entreat, for the respectability of the friends present, that there may be no similar interruption to this meeting. I am sure it cannot add to the weight of the cause of our opponents. (Hear, hear.) But if, on the other hand, we make out a case—if we substantiate those charges, we then conceive we are justified in pursuing those measures we are pursuing, and in making our appeal to this important portion of the large Methodist family, to come forward, and zealously and cordially co-operate with us in obtaining the restitution of our rights, (hear, hear,) with responsible guarantees that these rights shall henceforward be respected.

"In 1797, after years of agitation, of contention, of strife, of struggling, a constitution was obtained. It stands on record a monument of the piety, and determination, and perseverance of our forefathers. This constitution was *publicly* and *solemnly* ratified by two parties—145 preachers on behalf of Conference signed as one party; the assembled representatives of the people signed on behalf of the other party. I will now only call your attention for a moment to two important provisions contained in that constitution. The first was intended to secure the integrity of local meetings; the second to protect the rights of private members. 'No person shall be appointed a leader or society steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a leaders' meeting—the nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the leaders' meeting.' 'No person must be expelled from our society for any breach of the rules, or manifest immorality, till such fact be proved at a leaders' meeting.' (Hear, hear.) Now, a covenant to be effective must be equally binding on both parties—the people, as one party, it has been repeatedly

proved to demonstration, have invariably, piously, and faithfully observed their part of that important covenant, (hear,) but with deep regret we have to state that the other party, whom a high and sacred calling has served to shield from public suspicion, have been faithless—they have violated their part of that solemn covenant. (Applause and interruption.) The great violation of this treaty was first perpetrated at Leeds, in 1827, by a district meeting of preachers. The facts of that awful case are on record—they are palpable—they have to this day remained uncontradicted. The summary of the case is simply this—a party, a mere party, admitted to be a most influential and powerful party, in the Conference, in defiance of constitutional rights, with reckless haste and desperation, introduced into that united, that happy, that most prosperous society, a most obnoxious and offensive measure. (Hear, hear, and ‘No’ from Mr. M’Owan, with interruption.) I beg, if my previous pacific observations will not have the effect of succeeding in preserving calmness and attention, that I must make another remark, and it is this, that I never yet have been the man to be silenced by clamour. (Loud cheers for some time.) If you cause clamour ten-fold to what we have already witnessed, I assure you it will not put me out of temper. (Repeated cheering.) I mention this for your own sakes, that you may cease it, for it will not divert me for one moment from my purpose; you will only delay the meeting, and only vex and chafe your own spirits. (Cheers.)

“The consequence of the introduction of that offensive measure into that happy society was the sowing of dissension, discord, and ultimate division, when more than 1000 precious members were sacrificed in behalf of that most offensive measure. (‘Shame, shame.’) A special district meeting assembled in that town, in 1827, and what to do? What did they? I have their own published document in my hand, entitled a ‘Report of the Leeds Special District Meeting, Dec. 1827.’ It was printed, it was directed to be circulated, but where and to whom? universally? To all members of the Methodist Connexion? It was directed to be addressed to ‘respectable and influential members of our society.’ (Hear, hear.) That special district meeting went into the Leeds Society, and set aside the local authorities of Methodism in that society. They went into a leaders’ meeting, and set it at naught. They introduced into that meeting an odious, anti-Methodistical, anti-British test. (Applause.) They, the district meeting and preachers, expelled official members, and caused those awful transactions which have given a shock to the constitution of Methodism, and overturned the confidence of all who have read and reflected on the subject. (Hear, hear.)

“The Conference following, of 1828, after a hard struggle—(it must have been a severe fight, when it lasted for several days—I do not know particularly the precise number, four, five, or six days)—but, after a hard struggle, they came to the resolution to ‘screw their courage to the sticking place,’ and brave it out. (Much laughter.) They passed a series of offensive resolutions to the chief actors in that odious, that fatal transaction; and by so doing they adopted their measures as their own, and overturned the constitution of Methodism. (Applause.) The Conference following, of 1829, put the finishing stroke to the whole affair. Being annoyed by petitions, by representations from various places, they came to one sweeping determination upon the whole business. And what was it? They declared their determination to abide by the plan of pacification of 1795, and the concessions of 1797. Now, if they had stopped there, it would have been all very right; there would have been no dispute, no dissatisfaction; that was all the people wanted from them, to abide by the pacification plan of 95, and the concessions of 97, in the plain, unsophisticated, common-sense explanation, throughout the connexion: but, no, that was not their determination—it was to abide by the plan of pacification of 95, and the concessions of 97, as explained and applied in the Leeds business of 1827. (‘Hear’ and ‘Shame.’) It is quite true, we admit, they did not proceed at once and universally to carry into operation their determination—to carry out the whole construction and interpretation of Methodist law. Oh, no; and there was policy in their forbearance; ‘Wait, wait,’ they said, ‘till the excitement which this outrage on public faith has occasioned, this disturbance, this dissatisfaction, which has been manifested by various circuits at the attempt to overthrow the people’s liberties has subsided—wait till the foul and execrable transactions of Leeds are forgotten. Wait awhile!’ and counting upon the admitted general ignorance of the mass of the people on the subject of Methodist law, and I regret to say—but it is a fact which will not be disputed—the general indifference to Methodist law—‘Wait,’ they said, ‘until these affairs are lost sight of; until the transactions of Leeds are forgotten; until the people have fallen into a state of forgetfulness.’ And presuming, I suppose, that the set time was fully come, a little while ago they constructed, established, a College, or Theological Institution, (hear, hear,) the operation of which, be assured, if it be permitted to go on, will be to change the whole economy of the system, (loud cries of ‘hear, hear,’) will prove most baneful and deleterious to the simplicity, power, and efficiency of Methodism in the world; (hear, hear;) and they do that, also, in violation of public law: (hear, hear;) that fact has been demonstrated beyond contradiction by the venerable, and pious, and persecuted Dr. Warren. (Loud applause for some time.) You know the consequences to Dr. Warren for his spirited, his intrepid, his patriotic exposure of the ruling party in this anti-Methodistic scheme. No sooner had the amiable and venerable Dr. Warren fallen a victim to the resentment of this party, than he became most deservedly the object of the people’s sympathy. (Applause.)



When the sympathies of the people were roused, and they began to rally round the doctor, to cheer and encourage him, what was the consequence? Against them a system of the most disgusting and relentless persecution was commenced, which is truly revolting to contemplate. (Hear, hear.)

"Not only the enlightened members of the Established Church of this country, not only the different dissenting communities, but even intelligent and pious members of the Roman Catholic Church itself, stand aghast on beholding the fearful havoc which has been made in several of our societies by the cruel and oppressive hand of persecution. (Hear, hear.) Many of these cases have, of necessity, been published and placed before the public view. And now we are met by exclamations—'Are these cases you have published true? it cannot be.' The question, as put to myself, was, 'Why, Mr. Rowland, your case, as published, cannot be correct; you cannot have been so treated; you cannot have been put upon your trial; you cannot have been expelled from a Christian society, from the pure Christian society of Methodism, for any such conduct as is alleged against you, for joining in an expression of sympathy with a persecuted and suffering minister of Jesus Christ.' Nevertheless, it is the fact—the very first count in my indictment, penned and subscribed by the Rev. Samuel Jackson, was for my having had at my house a few Christian friends, to join me in an expression of our sympathy to Dr. Warren. (Loud cries of 'Shame,' and considerable interruption and clamour occasioned by Mr. Lofthouse rising upon his seat. The excitement was very great. Dr. Warren interfered, and Mr. M'Owan spoke, saying he wished for no interruption; he himself would not interrupt any one that night.) Mr. Rowland proceeded, mentioning the case of the man in the pillory, who, when told he could not be punished for so small an offence, replied, 'But, don't you see I am in the pillory!' So it was with him; he had been placed upon his trial, and expelled.

"Here I am, said Mr. Rowland, a member of your society from my boyhood—from ten years of age; a leader and local preacher in your society for twenty years: here I am, excommunicated, anathematized, by the Rev. S. Jackson. Some may say, Was that done according to law, to the constitution you have been speaking of? No, quite the contrary; in direct violation of that fundamental law of our local authorities. It is impossible for any man of common sense, of the plainest understanding, to misinterpret that law, 'No leader shall be received into, or expelled from office, but in conjunction with a leaders' meeting.' Well, had the Rev. S. Jackson the concurrence of a leaders' meeting (of which I was a member) in the excommunication of me from the society? No; he did it in the teeth of their solemn protestations. (Applause.) Nineteen out of twenty-seven leaders present, including accusers and witnesses, instantly and solemnly protested against the minister's decree. And I have another circumstance to add; because my brethren understood their rights, and saw that those rights were invaded and trampled upon in my person, and because they had the manliness and Christianity to stand up in defence of those rights, they have, every man of them, been expelled. (Loud shouts of 'Shame.') The Rev. S. Jackson, the superintendent of that circuit, would not meet those brethren in a leaders' meeting again. My case is only one amongst many others, but I have a question to ask, Why do these men dare thus to act? I will give you an answer; because at this day—I say it emphatically and most advisedly—we are at this day in the connexion without a constitution. (Loud cries of 'hear.') It has been set at nought, trampled upon; it has been violated; and now the Methodist connexion has no constitution. It was overthrown, seven years ago, at Leeds; and I ask you, my Hull friends, if you choose to submit to this state of things. As I have proved, I think, pretty clearly, that you have no constitution, what is the consequence? You are subject to the caprice and mere dictum and will of one man, your superintendent preacher. (Hear, hear.) The superintendent preacher now claims the right of deciding what question shall or shall not be brought before the meeting. Can there, I ask, be offered a greater insult to the common understandings of men, than that a meeting of leaders, chosen from amongst the people for their piety and good sense, should be precluded by the arbitrary will of one man from expressing their views and wishes intimately interesting to the church of God, over which they are placed as co-pastors? I ask you, official members of the Hull Quarterly meeting—I am happy to perceive some of your ministers present, who will be in a condition to set me right if I say any thing wrong—I ask if you, at your last Quarterly meeting, were permitted to introduce those topics into your meeting? (Cries of ('No.')

Why should your worthy superintendent, and my own personal friend, whom I respect, and the kindness and goodness of whose heart I can well appreciate, (hear, hear)—why should your excellent superintendent, and my kind and esteemed friend, Mr. Clegg, object to admit the truth at once? Why should he have any apprehension of it being known publicly that he, in his capacity of superintendent of this important society, placed his veto, his individual veto, on the introduction of these all-important and interesting subjects into your own legal meeting? (Mr. M'Owan made some observations, which, at the distance we were from him, and the noise which prevailed as soon as he rose, it was impossible to hear.) Mr. Rowland said, if Mr. M'Owan had a question to put to him, he begged he might be heard whilst he did so." (Cheers.)

Mr. M'Owan said—"I will not interrupt Mr. Rowland—I will not interrupt any person in his speech to-night, but this I will say—Mr. Rowland has appealed to the preachers present. I simply state, that the resolutions Mr. Clegg refused to have discussed in the

quarterly meeting were refused chiefly for these reasons, that they had been settled questions—that they had been settled by the highest authorities in the Connexion, some of them seven and others ten years ago, and this was acknowledged to him in private by Mr. Cookman, who compiled those resolutions. (Applause.)

Mr. GEORGE COOKMAN immediately rose and said,—“It was not my intention, Mr. Chairman, to have said a single word in this meeting on any question brought forward, but, in reply to what Mr. M’Owan has just stated with reference to the resolutions brought forward in the quarterly meeting by myself, I declare that the preliminary observations of these resolutions had never been answered; for why? because they contemplated the present agitated and disturbed state of the society. (Loud cheers.) And they were intended, Sir, as a healing measure, to meet the objections to those circumstances which had occasioned the present agitation.”

Mr. M’OWAN.—Mr. Cookman allows that matters had been settled. (Great interruption.)

Mr. ROWLAND.—“In my allusion to Mr. Clegg, I was not going to blame him. Mr. Clegg could not do otherwise than he did. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Clegg acted under orders. (Loud cheers and interruption.) Can there be any doubt about that, think you? (‘No,’ and laughter.) Mr. Clegg was under authority, and could not, and durst not, have acted otherwise. (Cheers.) The sovereign Pontiff had issued his mandate, (cheers and interruption); the gagging letters of the president to all the superintendent preachers of the various circuits, not to admit discussion, had been sent. Mr. Clegg, in this situation, durst not have introduced discussion; it would have been at his peril; if he had, he possibly might have been sent to Shetland for it. (Cheers.) And this is the humiliating and degrading condition in which your superintendent preachers themselves are placed; they are compelled to outrage all order, all decency, all common sense, all the feelings of an Englishman, (loud cheers and some hisses,) by telling large intelligent bodies of men, ‘You shall not put this question; you shall not moot that subject; you shall not pass those resolutions; if you do, I will leave the chair.’ (Laughter.) And what is the consequence? Why then it is an illegal meeting to be sure. Why, what an absolute despotism does that state of things involve. I know it is said in answer, ‘If the preacher violates the law, the aggrieved party has redress; he can appeal.’ What is the meaning of that appeal? let us just look at it. Every superintendent, according to the constitution,—mind you, I take my firm and immovable stand on the constitution of 97, not as explained at Leeds in 27; I never agreed to that; the people, the Methodist people, never agreed to that; they were a party to the constitution of 97—they were no party to the explained constitution of 27. It is understood, according to the constitution of 97, that every preacher refusing to submit a motion relative to the interests of Methodism, at a meeting of which he is chairman, violates that constitution. You have been informed no doubt, you have seen it in the usual channels of information, that your case at Hull is not an isolated one; you were not the only quarterly meeting refused to have discussion; the case was general; the mandate had spread over the length and breadth of the land; wherever these topics were mooted, they were met by ‘We can’t allow it.’ And now, I ask, notwithstanding there has been this general violation of the law, who is there that thinks of adopting the appeal we are told of. Why, is there one man in Hull thinks of bringing the worthy Mr. Clegg before a district meeting? Not one man in Hull, I will be bound. Who is there thinks of bringing a superintendent before his accomplices, every one of whom is implicated—the president of the Conference himself, the most faulty of all, having incited and commanded the commission of the crime (cheers and interruption). We are told often enough, and since I have come to town to-day I have been informed it has been said in Hull, that the Conference is the highest court of appeal. Bear this in mind. Now, as the highest court of appeal, in Methodism, I dare say it expects to be appealed to in the matters which are now convulsing the connexion. Now, according to our notions of good old English justice, a court of appeal ought to be pure, uncommitted, unpledged, unsuspected. But how stands the case with this highest court of appeal? The preachers have been required by their masters to commit themselves—the men who are to constitute this very highest court of appeal are already committed (hear, hear)—they are pledged: have they not been signing declarations by wholesale? (applause). More than eight hundred of these immaculate, these unsuspected, these upright judges, constituting this last and highest court of appeal, have already pledged themselves against the party appealing (cheers): they have bound themselves to uphold this unscriptural, this un-English, this intolerable Popish power. (applause). They may make themselves, however, very easy; they may sleep very comfortably to-night, and every night until Conference, so far as any apprehension need be entertained that they will be appealed to on such a subject. I know not that one preacher—no, neither of the two superintendent preachers of Liverpool—nor even the Rev. T. Dunn, of Carlisle himself, who seems determined to out-Herod Herod—whose conduct it is intended to bring before this highest court. We do not intend to appeal to Conference for redress of these wrongs—these violations of law. If we were to do so, believe me, if we were, you might set us down as qualified to hold a place in bedlam. But we do mean to appeal, (hear), we are in the course of appeal, we have commenced our appeal, (hear), we are going on with our appeal, and it is being listened to. We have come to Hull to make our appeal (loud cheers). We have lost our confidence in Conference, we will not go

to a special district meeting, we will go to the Methodist public, we will tell our people our tale of woe, we will state to our people our complicated wrongs; make our appeal to their feelings, their sense of right as Englishmen, for redress of these outrageous wrongs. And I frankly avow that we have come to Hull, and faced this large and intelligent assemblage to-night, in pursuance of this object—we come to make our appeal to this very important and intelligent portion of the vast Wesleyan Methodist family. (Cheers.) We come to tell you that there are portions of your family suffering under wrongs inflicted upon them, and, as an act of common justice, we claim your sympathy—we call upon you to help us in seeking redress of these complicated grievances. ('We will,' and loud cheers.) You have heard of an Association—I am a member of that Association. ('Glad of it,' and cheers.) I have great pleasure in assuring you that Association is powerful; it is an Association, for it is united—it is spreading—it will spread—it will cover the whole surface of this land. (Loud applause.) The preachers say, 'Oh! but it is illegal.' Will you be so gulled? ('No,' and applause.) I deny the charge that the Wesleyan Methodist Association is illegal, and I take my stand on this single fact in support of my assertion—we are spread over the length and breadth of the land; the Methodist societies are eminently one family, and, therefore, when we are suffering, we have a right to go to any portion of that family, in any part of the land, to tell our tale and call upon them to help us in obtaining our rights. (Cheers.) An association, and illegal! pray is not the Conference an association, and by what ties are they bound together? They have bound themselves together, and that very recently, by reiterated bonds; by declaration upon declaration that they cannot, they will not yield in the least. Now, then, there must be another association—('ay')—the people must unite. ('Yes,' and loud cheering.) I put it to you, will you give credence, for a moment, to the charge that the men who united in this Association can possibly be natural enemies of Methodism—('No' and 'Yes')—men who have been nursed and cradled in Methodism—men who have spent their energies, their property, their time, for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years in upholding Methodism—are they its natural enemies? (Shouts of 'No.') And what is the danger to be apprehended from such an association? I answer, none, as it relates to genuine Methodism. There is danger, I admit—there is jeopardy, I frankly avow—it is to something which is injurious to Methodism, something, which, if not removed will, aye, as a canker-worm at the root, be the destruction of Methodism. I admit there are fears about this Association, but who fears? The faction; the men in power fear it, and well they may. (Applause.) Those men who are now trembling and quailing at the prospect of the broad stern eye of the christian public of this country being directed to their deeds. It has been well remarked, that the whole series of Methodism is like an inverted cone based upon a single point—the preacher is everything and the people nothing. ('Hear' and 'No.') It is high time we enlarge the base, lest the cone, instead of being inverted, should lose all balance, and be broken in pieces by a sudden prostration. The Methodistic superstructure should be vastly enlarged—it is absolutely necessary to enlarge the foundation. If this view be correct, and our ministers understood their position, and could discern the signs of the times, they would hail this Association, and, instead of regarding it with pitiful jealousy, and loading us with opprobrious epithets; instead of branding us as disaffected Radicals, designing men, and all the rest of the bad names, they should at once come to our help, and give us their countenance. (Applause.) My friends, you will not be offended at the remark I am about to introduce; I am sure I do not intend any offence; if it offend some, it will not others, and I hope it will not any. This is the age of reform. (Loud cheers for some time.) Every institution, civil or ecclesiastical, is feeling its renovating power, (applause) and I ask what reason is there why reform should not penetrate even the Wesleyan Methodist Conference? (Cheers.) Is there anything in the genius of Wesleyan Methodism in this country that is opposed to reform of every kind? We are well convinced there is not. Let the people be informed of the bondage they are in; let them be acquainted with the authority practised by those would-be lords over God's heritage, and under which so many brethren are suffering and bleeding; of which they themselves may become the next victims; let them know that no sect of Christians is content, nor ought to be, to live under such a system of church government. Not even the tardily-paced Church of England itself, so encumbered as that establishment is with forms, liturgies, and ceremonies. Let Methodists know it is in their power—in your power; if you have the will you have the power, (cheers); the power is with the people; you have the power to restore Methodism to all the excellencies it ever possessed; and to effect this, the people have only to join this Association, and to say, as with one voice, to Conference, 'Reform yourselves, or we will reform you.' The Association recommend two great principles—first, the formation of branches to assist in the extension of information; secondly, *the stoppage of supplies* (great cheering and hissing, and cries of 'We won't,' the latter drowned in the repeated cheers.) This last may appear, I admit most frankly, it has on the face of it the appearance of harshness, but Conference has rendered it indispensably necessary. (Cheers and 'Yes.') We have seen it at Hull—we have seen that to petition is of no avail. The Conference have enriched themselves in what they conceive an impregnable stronghold of inherent rights. Rights God never gave them; they have no rights save those of saving souls, so far as God will give them power. (Cheers.) Rights to govern the people are received from the people, and can be withdrawn by the people. (Applause.) They are not like our divine master, accessible at all times to the

complaints of their children. Oh, no, they now affect superiority over the two Houses of Parliament. (Laughter.) They now claim a prerogative beyond that of the Monarch of these realms. (Cheers.) The two Houses of Parliament can be petitioned to, can be applied to,—the monarch of this land will receive into his presence the humblest subject with his petition,—but the Conference, the high and mighty Conference, is unapproachable (cheers) either by petition or otherwise, except in one way—there is one way of access, and I believe, in my conscience, it is the only way, that is the stoppage of supplies. (Loud cheers. A voice, ‘What are we to do with our missionaries?’ and interruption.) We are compelled to have recourse to these painful and necessary measures; and pray, in the name of reason and common justice, let the blame of this state of things be charged where it ought to be—that it lie at the door it ought—at the door of the Conference. (Applause and interruption.) A few words more and I have done. To those of you, my Christian friends, who see the necessity of coming forward, permit me, affectionately and most respectfully, to give a word of direction. The days of Methodism’s greatest glory and prosperity were, what think you, why, were days of persecution and suffering. (Hear, hear.) That glory, I and you regret, has, in a great measure at least, disappeared with the days of her simplicity and single-mindedness. Since Methodism was modernized by splendid chapels, pealing organs, and fashionable congregations, I ask what has become of all that odium, all that reproach, all that persecution formerly attendant on its profession. Now, those of you who are disposed to join us in this great Reforming Association, (loud cries of ‘Hear, hear,’) you are becoming revisited with a little of the former glory, by the persecution to which you will inevitably be exposed. Depend upon it if you join the Association you will be the victims of persecution. (Hear, hear.) They will say you are disaffected, and call you Radicals. (Hear, hear.) Every one in this assembly, I have no doubt, is quite disposed to go to heaven and receive the crown. Now, some are glad of the easiest possible way of arriving there. If you are of this class, I will just give you a few directions; that is, if you are among those disposed to go to heaven in the smoothest, easiest, most happy and comfortable way possible, do as you are bid, (hear, and laughter,)—be silent when you are bid—never open your lips to complain against Conference (laughter)—never utter a word of complaint against the conduct of your preachers (hear)—never reflect upon the usages and doings of your governors—always give your money at once and freely (loud applause) and never ask what is to become of it. (Repeated cheers and laughter.) Ay—I am sorry to say it, I regret it, but I avow it from close and many years actual observation—these are the qualities that will recommend you to your ministers (‘Shocking!’ from Mr. M’Owan)—these are the things that will procure you their smiles. (Applause.) Beyond this, if you are very fond of office you will have it; (laughter and ‘Shame!’) you will be courted; you will have the pastoral care of your preachers; they will have love and affection for you and these good deeds, and after your smooth and oily path is terminated, they would if they might snugly slip you into Paradise itself. (Disapprobation and loud cheers.) But, remember, the way to the crown is the way of the cross. Can you endure a little persecution? Can you make up your minds to go the narrow and thorny path to heaven? Can you, in the spirit of your divine Saviour, submit to have your names cast out as evil? Can you, as did many in apostolic times, submit to be cast out of the synagogue—to have all manner of evil said against you for Christ’s name? Then you are in good company. Jesus, your Lord and Master, so suffered and triumphed, and entered into rest. This is the royal road—the King of Heaven’s highway to heaven—the way of odium and reproach, of persecution, ay, even for the church itself. Do you wish your children, ay, posterity to the latest generation, to enjoy Methodism in its simplicity, in its power, in its glory? Then put down that college. (Loud cheers and interruption.) It is Anti-Methodistical (‘It is,’ and ‘No.’) It has been set up in violation of the law. (Cheers.) Did you in Hull ask for it? (general shouts of ‘No.’) Not a society in the connexion asked for it. It has been forced upon you—do not allow it to go on. (‘It will go on, and be supported;’ great excitement and cries of ‘Turn them out.’) If it be allowed to go on, then farewell to the simplicity, and power, and efficiency of Methodist preaching. I put it to every common understanding, will the young men sent from the labouring and mechanical classes of life to that college—is there any chance that they will come out of it more simple, more humble? (‘Yes,’ and shouts of ‘No.’) Will they be more successful than Bramwell? (Loud cries of ‘No.’) More useful than Nelson or Stoner? (‘No.’) Oh, no, depend upon it, young men are to be sent to that college for very different purposes; they are to be sent there to be taught the art of church government, to be instructed in the practices of Jesuitism, to be taught how to manage your meetings, how to slight independent men, how to pass by the man who has the honesty, manliness, and Christian courage to avow his sentiments in open day. (Loud cheers.) I am obliged to you for your kind attention to what I have had to say. [Mr. R. sat down amidst thunders of applause, after speaking nearly an hour and a half.]

Mr. LEES, of Manchester, then addressed the meeting, in an animated speech, after which

Dr. WARREN rose, and was received with loud and long-continued plaudits. After recapitulating the circumstances which led to the recent occurrences in



Manchester, he entered upon the subject of the College, in reference to which we make the following extract:—

"With regard to this college, of which so much has been said, it has been attempted to be proved, confidently said, and in high quarters too, that John Wesley was favourable to a college, and many enlightened men, and I mention with veneration the name of Richard Watson, have been led to hold the opinion, when, after all, by the testimony of Henry Moore, who was present at the time it was agitated (Mr. M'Owan, "No!"), he declared that John Wesley was inimical to it, but that Charles Wesley was the person who, for two or three years, dwelt upon the necessity of a college. It turns out that, within the compass of the last four days, a letter, which may be supposed satisfactorily to settle that point for ever, fell into my hands—it is an original letter of the Rev. John Wesley's. —(Hear, hear.) I met with it most accidentally—I may say providentially. It will convince you that John Wesley, up to within three years of his death, and he did not alter his mind after that—up to his dying day, as Mr. Moore mentioned, he solemnly protested against a college. (Hear, hear.) I shall, with your permission, read you the words of that valuable letter. It is dated London, September 20, 1788, and addressed to Francis Asbury, who had gone to America, and who, it appeared, wished to raise Methodism to a rank something like that which ecclesiastical dignity holds in this country. These are the words of Mr. Wesley:—

M. M'OWAN.—Is it his handwriting?

DR. WARREN.—I have transcribed it—this is a copy. The Doctor then read the following:—

"London, September 20, 1788.

"DEAR BROTHER,—There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation in which I stand to *all* the Methodists. I am, under God the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all in a manner no other person can do. Therefore I, in a measure, provide for you all; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you he could not provide, were it not for me—were it not, that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing. But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be *little*; you study to be *great*—(hear, hear)—I *creep*; you *strut* along. (Applause.) I found a *school*; you a *college*—(loud applause)—nay, and call it after your own names! Oh, beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all.

"One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called a bishop? I shudder,—I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a bishop! (Cheers.) For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

"Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart; and let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely I am, your affectionate friend and brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

After Dr. Warren's address the benediction was pronounced, and the meeting separated, at a quarter past eleven.

## PROCEEDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

### AN ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL AND EXPULSION OF MR. JOHN STUBBS, CLASS LEADER IN THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT.

Mr. Stubbs received notice of trial (couched in the usual terms) on the 14th of January. On the 15th he addressed the following letter to the Rev. G. Marsden:—

Liverpool, January 15, 1835.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Since I received your notice of trial yesterday, it has led me out very much in prayer to God to direct me in so important a matter, and I think it is quite unnecessary for me to attend the leaders' meeting to-night, or to give any brother the painful task of proving any guilty\* charge against me, as I am in the habit of acknowledging my guilt as soon as I feel it, for I cannot live under the sense of any: and as I am at peace with you and the meeting, and my object in staying away is to avoid any more such painful circumstances as have of late occurred in the meeting: my soul is at present happy, and I wish to keep it so. You recollect, Sir, that awhile ago I acknowledged in the meeting to being a member of the Association; and as your note charges me with "being, or having been, a member," I cannot deny this. But, Sir, I must be

\* I wish here to make this distinction that, although I admit the *fact* of my being a member of the Association, I deny the *guilt*.

candid and tell you, that my dependence is not upon the Association but on God, and my prayer to him has been that if the Association is not of him he would bring it to nought; and since you told me that there were amongst them factious and designing men, I thought I would watch their proceedings as far as I could. I had nothing of the sort in my mind, and I do not think that they have; and I was determined to oppose whatever I found to be wrong. I hope you do not consider me accountable for all that has been done or published, as I have disapproved of some things—such as this sentiment, “no honest man,” &c. You know which I allude to. I think it too strong; hoping that Conference would grant the small things that I wanted, without such measures being resorted to. All I wanted was free discussion in our quarterly and leaders’ meetings; and that some general measure might be adopted, calculated to remove discontent and distrust between the preachers and people, and restore confidence, so that the work of God may go on and souls be saved in greater abundance. I am sorry to say this has not been the case of late, as the quarter before last (previous to the commencement of the Association) there was a decrease of between forty and fifty members, and that number of backsliders; so that something must be wrong somewhere.

If, therefore, under these circumstances, I must be expelled, I rather wish you would give me a call, and tell me so, and I will deem this sufficient under present circumstances, as I am not alarmed at being expelled from a church which is in such a state as we are at present.

I have sent you the class-money that is due, and, in respect to my members, they are at liberty to act for themselves. If you appoint any person to it they must choose for themselves; I had some thoughts of seeking a section of the church that is at peace, but this I will not do in haste.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, respectfully and affectionately,

JOHN STUBBS.

The case was not, however, brought forward until the 29th January, at the Pitt-street leaders’ meeting. After the usual business of the meeting,—

Mr. DIXON said, has Brother Stubbs any communication to make to this meeting?

Mr. STUBBS.—No, Sir; I am expecting to receive some communication from this meeting.

Mr. DIXON.—Mr. Marsden commissioned me to bring your case before this meeting. I understand your name was called over at the Music-hall as a class leader of the Association.

Mr. STUBBS.—I am not aware of that, Sir; I never heard it called, and if any one did call my name I never gave them authority to do so.

Mr. DIXON.—I suppose your mind is made up to remain with the Association, and you know you cannot remain in that and in our Society; they wont work together.

Mr. STUBBS.—Yes, Sir, my mind is made up; I do not see my way clear to leave the Association; I assure you I have not taken any step in this affair, but in reference to eternity, and I have made it a matter of prayer to God for his direction. I am not aware that I have done any thing to injure the ministerial character or usefulness of the preachers, or to prevent them from preaching a full and free salvation; and, indeed, as an honest man, I cannot leave it at present. When my trial was to have come on a fortnight ago, I sent a note to Mr. Marsden, and stated that my reason for not attending the leaders’ meeting was, I did not wish to excite any more such painful feelings either in my own mind or in the minds of my brethren, as we had to suffer when Brother Cole was expelled, and if I was expelled by the meeting I should be satisfied if he would call and tell me so.

Mr. MARTIN.—I am just in the same situation, Sir, as Brother Stubbs, and I really should be very glad to have my trial now, and to stand or fall with him.

Mr. DIXON.—I am only here as the superintendent’s deputy, and have no communication respecting Brother Martin’s case; that cannot be gone into to-night. After a little more conversation Mr. Dixon said,—Brother Stubbs, this may be settled in one sentence; do you intend to leave the Association?

Mr. STUBBS.—No, Sir.

Mr. DIXON.—Then I am authorized by Mr. Marsden to say, Brother Stubbs is no longer a member of this Society.

Mr. THORPE.—Here are two persons charged and found guilty of one and the same crime; are situated exactly alike in the Methodist Society and the Association, and also in respect to the decision of their minds, and yet the law allows that one be expelled and the other remain. What kind of law can this be? If

Brother Stubbs was expelled by the consent of a majority of this meeting, I would not say one word, and until then he is as much a member of this meeting as any one leader that attends it. What is the meaning of these words? "No person shall be," &c.

Mr. DIXON.—That rule has been brought over often enough; that rule has no power to expel a member from society; it is only to remove a leader from office for want of ability or talent, or who is guilty of some crime. There is no penalty annexed to that rule.

Mr. THORPE.—There is no rule that I know of that has any penalty annexed to it. Every leader in this meeting has broken a Methodist law. There is a rule that says, "Every leader shall see each member of his class once a week at least:" and who has not broken this rule? There is no penalty annexed to this any more than to that, or to the one by which you are expelling leaders, and you might with as much justice put them out of society for one as for the other. According to your own interpretation of this rule, Sir, let the sense of this meeting be taken, and if Brother Stubbs be removed from his office by a majority, we will submit to it.

Mr. STUBBS.—Yes, Sir; let the majority of this meeting say I am removed from office and I will give you my class-book, and persuade the members to stick to you.

Mr. DIXON.—The sense of the meeting has been taken before.

Mr. THORPE.—The sense of the meeting was taken thus, Sir. Mr. Marsden read a rule, and then said, "Those of you who believe this rule has been broken, hold up your hands." He did not say—Is this rule Methodistical? or will this rule expel a leader from his office?—but merely, has this rule been broken? And, for aught we know, it might as soon have been a rule of the Hindoos as of the Methodists. If the brethren will now stand up, and, by so doing, express their opinion that Brother Stubbs is legally expelled, I will consent to it; and until then, I shall ever consider Brother Stubbs a member of this meeting.

Mr. DIXON.—You would protect one another by that rule. It would be reviving the age of Popery; it would be like an ancient custom called the benefit of clergy, which enabled the priests to protect from the civil law any person who fled to the altar; and you would protect one another from the law. Mr. Dixon then endeavoured to show to the meeting generally, but to Brother Stubbs in particular, that there were no reasons for joining the Association, and many why he should leave it, and then observed that two of the clearest headed persons in the Association had acknowledged that Methodism and the Association cannot work together.

Mr. THORPE.—They never were intended to work together; but, as medicine works upon the human form when out of order, it only works until it meets and removes the disease, and then the power of the medicine is destroyed, and the body restored to a healthy state.

Mr. TORBET.—As the superintendent is not present, will Mr. Dixon be so kind as to withdraw the sentence on Brother Stubbs, and let the case stand as when the meeting commenced?

Mr. DIXON.—I have no objection, provided the brethren have none.

The meeting was then peaceably concluded by prayer.

#### PITT-STREET LEADERS' MEETING,

FEBRUARY 5, 1835.

Mr. MARSDEN, in his usual mild and affable manner, exhorted the members of the meeting to unity and activity, that they might have a revival of the work of God amongst them in this circuit. He then said,—he and his colleagues had thought of having a tea-party, comprising all the leaders, local-preachers, and stewards in the circuit, at the Mount Vestry, on Monday night next; and a second tea-party at a future day for those persons who were not in office, but took an active part in the prayer meetings, &c. And such was the strain of pious feeling and burning charity to which he gave utterance, that many a heart in the vestry bounded with gratitude to God, and said,—“Surely the bitterness of death is past,” and we shall have no more to witness the cruel and unjust expulsion of the men of God from office. But, lo! the hope was delusive, for the superintendent turned from the subject of the tea-party and said, he held in his hand a letter he had received from Brother Stubbs three weeks ago, and would read the last clause of it.” He then said, He called on Brother Stubbs a week

after the receipt of this letter, and had a little conversation with him, and thought he was satisfied, and did not intend to come any more to their meetings. He thought it was rather more through the wish of his brethren than his own that he was there that night.

Mr. STUBBS.—I have no wish to stay away from the meetings, Sir; the members of my classes will not leave me, and I shall have to take their monies somewhere, and to what place can I take them but to this leaders' meeting? If I was a private member I could come in again at the proper door if you expelled me. Under these circumstances I shall bring my money as usual.

Mr. MARSDEN.—We will not argue about the matter now.

Mr. STUBBS.—I sent you that letter, Sir, and requested that it might be read, that my brethren might know what I was about. I think you may read the whole of the letter; it is very respectful, and I should wish my brethren to hear it.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Yes, there is nothing in the letter but what may be read here, and as you wish to have it read I will do so. (He then read the letter.)

After a little more conversation from Mr. Marsden, in which he implied that Brother Stubbs was not a member the Society, although the sentence of expulsion was not formally pronounced, without allowing time for any answer, he commenced that most memorable verse—

“ Together let us sweetly live,  
Together let us die.”

but before the tune could be started

Mr. JOHN HUGHES said,—Have you power, Sir, to expel a brother without trial? I do not approve of the Association, but I wish to know if, when you want to remove a leader, you can send him away when you think proper?

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Hughes, the case was tried seven or eight weeks ago, and by this meeting the law was proved to have been broken.

Mr. THORPE.—This meeting does not acknowledge that law.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Whether you acknowledge it or not, it is law, and has been acted upon for the last seven or eight years.

Mr. HUGHES.—In a court of justice if the law be doubtful the criminal has the benefit of it, and a respite is granted until, by an Act of Parliament, the law is revised or amended; and, I think, Sir, these brethren might remain until Conference, when the law might be cleared of its ambiguity.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Stubbs's case is very clear,—he published his name in the newspapers as one of the Committee of the Association, and he cannot be a member of our society.

Mr. MARTIN.—My name appeared in the public papers, Sir, and I believe I am the only one left who received notice for trial; and, though painful to me to be separated from this body, and especially from my brethren around me, yet I now desire it. Sir, my brethren being thus cut off, I wish to share the same fate as Brother Stubbs.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Your case differs from Brother Stubbs's,—you have not attended the Association meetings of late—Brother Stubbs has; you have not been working in the Association meetings—Brother Stubbs has; you have not brought a book into your class and taken the names of your members into the Association—Brother Stubbs has.

Mr. MARTIN.—Yes, Sir, I had a book; and I took the names of the members, but did not take them into the Association.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Your class did not follow you to the love-feast at the Music-hall—Brother Stubbs's did. I hope you will see your way clear to withdraw; we will let your case lie over for the present.

Mr. THORPE.—How can the way be clear to withdraw, Sir, after the interpretation of the law we have had? We are told that the law which every leader considers his legal bulwark and defence is not available in this case, because it has no penalty annexed to it. It cannot expel a member, but merely remove a leader from office; and to allow it to be acted upon now would be to revive the age of popery.

Mr. MARSDEN.—(when Mr. Thorpe was speaking)—Who said so?—when was that?—who said that? The answer was given by three or four persons—“At the last leaders' meeting, by Mr. Dixon.”

Mr. BYROM.—Brother Thorpe must have misunderstood Mr. Dixon.

Mr. THORPE.—I appeal to the meeting. If I am in error, I am willing to be corrected.



**Mr. TORBET.**—Perhaps this may be the only opportunity I may have, Sir, of speaking to the character of the brethren who are expelled. I know them well. Three of them, Messrs. Cole, Howson, and Stubbs, have been band mates with me during a period of ten years, and I perhaps know as much of them as any man, and they of me; and, Sir, to say that you have not three more pious and upright men in the circuit would be saying too little—you cannot expel them from the Connexion. This public testimony I think I am bound to make under these circumstances. Such, Sir, are the men you are expelling.

After a little more conversation, Mr. Marsden, kneeling down in the midst, asked Mr. Stamp to close the meeting with prayer.

At the leaders' meeting held on the 12th February Mr. Stubbs attended as usual. Previously to the meeting being formally commenced, Mr. Joseph Russell, who had just whispered with the Rev. Geo. Marsden, said—"I wish to know on what authority Mr. Stubbs is present this evening?" After a moment's pause, Mr. Stubbs said—"What do you mean, Sir?" Mr. Russell then said—"I am instructed to inquire in what capacity you appear at this meeting?" Mr. Stubbs then said—"I appear as a leader as usual, not considering myself legally expelled." Mr. Russell then said—"You are legally expelled in the opinion of some; and, as a trustee of this chapel, I order you to leave this meeting." Mr. Stubbs replied—"I shall not leave this meeting for any one individual. If my brethren think proper to vote my expulsion, then I shall leave, and shall come no more." Here Mr. James Hall, who, to use his own language, "is newly caught," having been appointed chapel steward very recently, and who is also a trustee, interfered, and said—"Why, now, Brother Stubbs, I am surprised to hear you make use of such language; I don't think that any other man in the meeting would have said so. Don't you know very well that the trustees can order any person off the premises?" "What, then, (said Brother Stubbs) have the trustees the control of the leaders' meeting?" The reply was, "Yes, to be sure they have; and they can do what they like with the premises, and can prevent any meeting being held, as they may think proper." Mr. Russell again said—"You have no business to come disturbing us, and preventing our going on with the business." Brother Stubbs replied—"I am not disturbing you, nor preventing business; it is you that are making a disturbance. I come to pay in my class-money, and appear in my place, not considering myself legally expelled." Here a brother read the rule respecting the appointing and removing of officers, &c. when Mr. Marsden said—"That law has frequently been explained: but we are not come here to discuss our laws; we know what the duties of trustees are, and we understand the laws relative to the trustees. I shall not now disturb the meeting by entering into any particulars with Mr. Stubbs; I shall leave the trustees to take what steps they please hereafter. Mr. Stubbs told me in his letter that my dismissing him privately, in his own house, would be sufficient, and now, contrary to his own statements in his letter, he comes disturbing this meeting." Brother Stubbs said—"You have not stated all the truth respecting my letter." Mr. Marsden, however, interrupted him, by saying—"We shall not be prevented from beginning our meeting in the usual way, by prayer, though 'a man has intruded himself among us.'" The meeting then commenced, by the reverend gentleman engaging in prayer.

*Feb. 12, 1835.*

The subjoined protest, signed by ten class leaders, in the Pitt-street society, was sent to the Rev. G. MARSDEN, accompanied by the following note:

**REV. AND DEAR SIR,**—As you were not present at the leaders' meeting of the 29th ultimo, the inclosed protest was not allowed to be read; and last night there not appearing any opportunity for reading it, we, the signers of the said protest, beg leave to present it for your perusal at your leisure.

*Feb. 6, 1835.*

*Liverpool, Feb. 6, 1835.*

We, the undersigned, have for many years been the servants of the church for Christ's sake, and we have been instant in season and out of season, labouring for the glory of God and the salvation of our fellow-men. We conscientiously believe that our duty to Him whom we serve in the Gospel, and the candour which ever should subsist between the officers of a Christian church and their pastor, ought, at a crisis like the present, to lead

us to an expression of our views in a less vague and desultory manner than that of a conversation in a leaders' meeting.

We pass by the various subjects which have from time to time disturbed the societies, all of which are fit and proper subjects for discussion by us, either collectively or individually, and, in the exercise of our judgment upon them, it cannot be denied that we have the equal right to judge of them, coolly and dispassionately, at any time, and with any assembly of persons whatsoever: but we pass by these matters, whether they be the introduction of organs into Methodist chapels contrary to the consent of a leaders' or quarterly meeting,—the establishment of a college,—the right of a superintendent to expel leaders without the consent of a majority of their brother officers,—the suppression of free discussion at quarterly meetings,—or to refuse to put a motion when agreeable to a majority, if he disapproves of it,—the illegality of special district meetings for the trial of a circuit preacher, not in strict accordance with the "Plan of Pacification,"—all these important considerations we leave, and confine ourselves wholly to the circumstances of our own circuit, and the situation in which we are placed by your expulsion of Brother Cole, and more particularly by the more recent expulsion of the brethren Morgan, Christian, and Bridson. We view with deep and heartfelt regret that recklessness of procedure which could read from the bosom of a Christian church, and from the advantages of Christian fellowship and communion, men who have been so long united with each other, and upon whose moral character not a spot of guilt can be affixed; and as to the ground of their excommunication, nothing has been proved or alleged against them, either by implication or express direction from the word of God.

It is not our province to prescribe a remedy for the disordered state of our societies we trust, however, that the Conference, with whom the providence of God appears to have entrusted the spiritual interests of the church, will be guided by the infallible and unerring spirit of Christ to a wise and scriptural decision, and to expunge every law of Methodism that is adverse to Christian liberty, and the undisturbed administration of Gospel privileges; for we cannot for a moment entertain the opinion that our brethren ought to suffer a similar punishment to that which was pronounced against the abettors of the ancient heresies of Apostolic times. We deprecate the painful situation in which we are placed, to witness others of our brethren expelled upon a law at least of questionable authority; and since the present distracted state of our society in Liverpool seems to be unavoidable, we feel a strong disposition not only deeply to sympathize but to suffer with them. Sooner or later we must fall under the same condemnation. If we loved our brethren in prosperity, surely the bonds of Christian affection will be drawn closer under adversity. We have identified ourselves with them in prosecuting our claims to a participation of our just rights; we are alike with them members of the "Wesleyan Association;" our fate is in your hands: but we solemnly protest against their expulsion as well as our own, inasmuch as it is totally repugnant to the constituted laws of our body as laid down in the Plan of Pacification and the Concessions of 1797.

Signed,

JOHN STUBBS,  
ROBERT THORPE,  
JAMES MARTIN,  
THOMAS STOREY,  
JAMES PEARSON,

ROBERT DAY,  
WILLIAM BENNION,  
WILLIAM JOHNSTON.  
SAMUEL THOMAS,  
GEORGE HOLLIWELL.

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### A "PREACHER'S DECLARATION" EXTRAORDINARY.

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We have great pleasure in giving insertion to the following letter from a travelling preacher, now stationed in Yarm, addressed to the editor of the *Christian Advocate*. The eight hundred and odd preachers who subscribed the celebrated "declaration" in favour of things as they are can surely have no objection to one of their brethren publishing his "declaration" in favour of things as they ought to be.

DEAR SIR,—I have hitherto remained a silent, though deeply-interested observer of what the *Watchman* designates the "Anti-Wesleyan Movement," by which our very extensive Connexion has been of late, and still is, so painfully and alarmingly agitated.

I am not much surprised at the various demonstrations which have been made in several places to uphold a system of church government which vests in the preachers' exclusive legislative authority; a system which I feel no hesitation in asserting has no foundation in the word of God, nor in the practice of the church of

Christ, in its purest and primitive state, and which, if it be persevered in, will continue the fruitful source of divisions, schisms, and almost every evil work; and I think I should feel myself warranted in asserting that it is to this *unscriptural innovation* almost all the divisions which have taken place in our Connexion may be remotely or directly traced.

If my memory serves me correctly, it was at one of the London Conferences I heard the late Mr. Richard Watson state that the preachers had no scriptural warrant to sit with closed doors, or to refuse the admission of lay delegates, but on the ground of their extraordinary call to the work of the ministry,—and I believe his statement was not disputed; but it appears to me, from the determined manner of the leading men in our Conference to maintain the Theological Institution, that, by that act, they virtually deny the extraordinary call of the new race of Wesleyan Methodist preachers, and are content henceforth to appear as other ministers, and unable to say, with the inspired Paul, “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” 1 Cor. ii, 4, 5. They now wish to come to us with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto us the testimony of God. If so, ought they not, as a necessary consequence, to admit lay delegates into the Conference? or, at least, willingly accede to the temperate, able, and reasonable propositions of the London trustees, as held forth in their declaration, which was inserted in your paper of the 18th ultimo?

I have asserted that, so far as my information extends, nearly all divisions, if not absolutely every, division of importance which has occurred in our Connexion, has been the result of the exercise of ministerial irresponsible power. Now, the statement is correct, or otherwise; if correct, which I most firmly believe it is, then, does it not well become the next Conference to take the subject into its most deliberate consideration? I would put the question seriously to our preachers, and ask them upon what principle can they wish to retain and exercise a power so injurious to its possessors, and destructive to those over whom it is exercised? Tell me not of the rights and liberties of the people, neither of the charter gained by the giants of 1797. As for our once boasted charter, I seriously ask, where is it? *Where evil can be committed with impunity, the charter is a falsehood, and liberty is a vain word!* Can any individual who is acquainted with the melancholy instances of misrule which are occurring in our Connexion deny that evil has been committed with impunity? *Of what real value, then, I ask again, is our charter?*

I had resolved never more to interfere with the subject of Methodistical church government. I have done so once, and was not supported even by those who thought with me. I have, as an individual, nothing to gain by a more liberal, or, rather, more scriptural mode being adopted. The district meetings and the Conferences are open to me; but so long as private members can be expelled from the Society at the will of the preacher, against the decision of a leaders’ meeting,—so long as a leader can be deprived of his office against the consent of his brethren,—so long as free discussion can be prevented in our quarterly meetings, or the chairman can refuse to put *any* motion, however reasonable such motion may appear to the meeting,—so long as the Conference claims the right and power of making laws, and enforcing them on the whole Connexion, whether such laws are approved or condemned by a majority, or *even by the whole Connexion*—I cannot but express my disapprobation of such proceedings, and of such monstrous claims, and if expulsion from the body, to which I have hitherto felt it an honour to belong, shall be the consequence of this honest expression of my opinions, I rather choose to incur such consequence than apostatize from my sentiments, or, what I deem equivalent thereto, *cowardly shrink from maintaining and avowing them in the hour of peril.* I, therefore, very cheerfully respond to the call of Mr. Ververs, which, I suppose, has met with the sanction of the Book-room Committee, and “firmly and respectfully, in the present momentous crisis of affairs, avow my fixed principles on subjects of Methodistical polity.” I may be mistaken; but I feel as if I could not forbear stating my opinions any longer with a good conscience.

Then it will appear, from what I have written, I want something new in Methodism. I think I have as good, if not a better, claim to the title of a “Wesleyan Methodist” as the eight hundred preachers who have signed a late Declaration, wishing to keep things as they are; for I am not afraid of seeing our first principles overturned, if they will not bear the test of strict investigation; neither was the venerable founder of our Connexion afraid, as will evidently

appear by a reference to the Minutes of the first Conference, in which he asked

"Question.—What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?"

"Answer.—If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better: if they are true, they will bear the strictest examination."

I conclude by most cordially wishing you God speed in overturning false principles, and establishing those which are true, and subscribe myself your most sincere well-wisher,

*Yarm, Feb. 12, 1835.*

ROBERT EMMETT.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Permit us, through the pages of your publication, to reply to a charge which has been preferred against us in a contemporary print, of a breach of faith as secretaries of the Association. We are accused with officially sending an invitation to the preachers to attend the late meeting at the Music-hall, under the express understanding that discussion would be permitted, and that when an official character (Mr. Walthew) did attempt to reply he was stopped by the Chairman, and not allowed the opportunity of discussing the question, in which asserted act of unfairness we, as secretaries, are stated to be implicated.

The paragraph in our note to the preachers alluded to was the following:—  
"As it has been held out repeatedly to the public, by means of the press, that the statements of the Association are untrue, and their alleged grievances fictitious, full opportunity will be given at this meeting for any preacher or official character to reply to the instances brought forward of repeated violations of the laws of 1795 and 1797."

Now, we are not aware that any attempt was made at the meeting in question to deny the charges brought forward of the violation of these laws by the preachers. Had any such reply been intended, the proper place for it would have been after either Mr. Farrer's or Mr. Pooley's address, both of which contained charges of repeated breaches of the laws, Mr. Gordon's speech chiefly referring to the principles of the Methodist constitution. Mr. Walthew rose (according to his own report) to ask certain questions from the Chairman and Mr. Gordon, and, in order that they might be answered, it was necessary that he should stop speaking. We believe the ordinary rule in such cases, at public meetings, is, that when an individual rises for the purpose of asking for an explanation it is customary for him to wait for an answer before digressing into other topics. After Mr. Gordon's explanation Mr. Walthew asked certain questions from the Chairman, which were answered, and the meeting concluded, Mr. Walthew not attempting again to speak. We have only to add, in corroboration of the above statement, that Mr. Walthew himself admitted to Mr. Picton, on the morning after the meeting, that he had no cause of complaint against the committee or the individuals on the platform, as they did all they could to prevent any interruption whilst he was speaking.

We are, &c.

J. A. PICTON.

JOHN BRIDSON.

*Feb. 19, 1835.*

[It has been stated that in the report of the meeting published in No. 4 of the *Lantern* we designated Mr. Walthew as "one Walthew." This is not true. We wish to treat every person with respect, whatever his circumstances in life may be.—*Edt.*]

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—A scene of rather a singular nature was enacted in the vestry of Mount-pleasant Chapel, on Wednesday evening last. The Rev. J. Dixon was meeting several classes for tickets. Most of the members of Mr. Gibson's class having contributed to the yearly collection, Mr. Bew, who received his ticket the last, being asked what he would contribute to the same fund, replied, "Nothing, Sir." "Nothing!" replied Mr. Dixon, seemingly quite astounded, "Nothing, Sir." Mr. D. turning to the leader, "I perceive, Brother Gibson, that you have at least one member in your class belonging to the Association." Mr. Bew.—"I do not belong to the Association, Sir, but I have, nevertheless, good reasons for withholding any contribution to this fund, which I will state, if required." After this class was dismissed, Mr. Samuel Thomas's class was called upon. Several of these members had been previously visited at their own houses by the Reverend Mr. Dixon, for the purpose of privately giving them their tickets; which, however, they refused to accept in this clandestine manner, suspecting



some design. Mr. Dixon expatiated at considerable length on the direful consequences to be apprehended from what he was pleased to call "the gigantic Association" now in existence; and concluded by stating, that he was directed by his superintendent, Mr. Marsden, to refuse a ticket to the leader, Mr. Samuel Thomas. This caused considerable excitement in the class. By far the greater number of the members refused to accept of their tickets, unless the leader was allowed to have his also. Mr. W. Johnstone rose and said, that he had been a member of the Methodist Society forty-five years, and a class leader for twenty-two years, and never witnessed such outrageous proceedings before. One of the female members put it to Mr. Dixon whether that was the time and place to introduce any such subject, adding, that if their leader was accused of any thing improper, a competent tribunal (the leaders' meeting) was in existence, before which, and not before the class, he ought to be tried. Mr. Dixon acknowledged that the course pursued was not the most proper one; that, in his opinion, Mr. Thomas ought to have been tried at the leaders' meeting, but that he had no discretionary power,—he was obliged to obey the orders he had received from Mr. Marsden. The whole of the members, except five or six females, retired without receiving their tickets, after a scene of confusion and excitement, certainly most unfavourable to those feelings which ought to predominate on such occasions.

*Birmingham.*—Arrangements are now making for a public meeting in this place. The following anecdote we insert on the authority of a most respectable gentleman in Birmingham, a trustee for three Methodist chapels there. Dr. Clarke, when in Birmingham, used to make our friend's house his home. Soon after the fatal Conference which sanctioned the proceedings of the Leeds special district meeting in 1827, the Doctor came to his house as usual, happening to pass through Birmingham, and in the course of conversation touching on this topic observed, "*The Conference has spent so many days in doing the Devil's work, and they have just done it as the Devil wished.*"

*Wolverhampton.*—We are just informed that in this place a great majority of the leaders and official characters are resolved on taking some decisive steps in the cause of reformation forthwith. We expect shortly to communicate further information to our readers.

*Northwich Circuit.*—The Rev. Wm. Sugden appears to be very busy at the work of excision; we shall in our next give a fuller account of some late proceedings in this quarter: the Conference coffers, however, do not appear likely to get filled from this neighbourhood, by the following statement:—"The Chapel Fund collection was made on Sunday se'nnight in the Kingsley and Norley chapels. In the one 2s. 9d., and in the other 1s. 5d. were collected."

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We will endeavour to insert in our next Mr. Buckley's Letter—The Appeal of the Sunday School Committee—Mr. Grindrod's continuation—and Mr. Davidson's trial.

The Account of the Trial and Expulsion of Mr. Lockwood, of Skipton, is come to hand, and shall have an early insertion.

We must request our readers to correct two errata, which in some degree alter the sense of what was intended to be conveyed. One is to be found in No. 4, page 50, where it is stated that "Resolutions demanding redress of grievances had been *passed*," in certain circuits. The word passed should have been *proposed*. The other is in the note at the foot of page 109, which instead of referring to Mr. Thorpe's speech ought to belong to Mr. Marsden's, the words having been used by that gentleman.

We have also to acknowledge communications from Mr. W. Morgan, Liverpool—Mr. James Edwards, Frodsham—Two letters from Birmingham—R. S. and T. R.

We are obliged to our friend R. T., of Stourbridge, for his letter which we will insert as soon as possible.

The *Gentleman* in Manchester who endeavoured to palm a stupid hoax upon us is hereby informed that his design of picking our pocket has been frustrated. It is his Majesty's revenue which has suffered to the amount of the postage.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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## THE METHODIST DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN LIVERPOOL.

We have delayed noticing the recent extraordinary proceedings relative to the Methodist schools in Liverpool, until the appearance of the annual report. This report is at length published, and now lies before us; we therefore embrace the earliest opportunity of laying before the Methodist public a plain unvarnished statement of facts, which exhibit, in a striking point of view, the reckless conduct of a party, who, to further the arbitrary designs of their ecclesiastical despots, feel no compunction in sacrificing, on the altar of prejudice, the usefulness, tried experience, and long-continued labours of all who may conscientiously differ from them, and with whom the prosperity, nay, the very existence of this, or any other institution, would seem to weigh little when put in competition with their darling power.

The Sunday schools connected with the Methodist societies have, for a long period, constituted a sphere of action which has called forth all the energies of an unpretending and humble, but most meritorious and numerous class of individuals, as teachers. By their means the good seed of the word of life has been sown, and when the tender herb has begun to put forth its shoots, giving promise of a future harvest, it has been watched over and watered with a fond care and a delighted attention, which none but a Sunday-school teacher can fully appreciate. In these arduous labours they have stood (in Liverpool at least) nearly alone; seldom have they been favoured with the countenance and assistance of what are now significantly termed the "*influential*" portion of the Methodist community: the appearance of a preacher within the walls of a Sabbath school was quite an era in its history; though composing, *ex officio*, part of the committee of management, their visits were

"Like those of angels, few and far between."

Left thus, in a great degree, to their own unaided energies, the Sunday schools naturally became nurseries of independent thought and manly feeling. The jealousy with which the exercise of any degree of free will on the part of the Sunday-school teachers has been regarded, has frequently manifested itself in acts of bitter hostility on the part of the Conference agents. Numerous instances in point might be cited; we will content ourselves with referring to the cruel usage of Mr. G.

Lowe, of Chester, and the repeated collisions which have taken place at Manchester. The opinion entertained by the Conference party of the teachers and conductors in Liverpool, may be gathered from the following fact. At the commencement of the Association in Liverpool, a few months ago, a gentleman, high in the confidence of the preachers, publicly gave it as his opinion that "it was all concocted in the Sunday schools." Had this gentleman been better acquainted with the laborious duties of a Sunday-school teacher, he would have known that little time is there afforded for any thing extraneous to the proper business. The fact, however, is, that the active members of the Association, both in Liverpool and elsewhere, are, or have been, active labourers in Sabbath schools. Why have these individuals particularly come forward at the present crisis, but that, from their situation in the church, they have had opportunities of witnessing the total neglect of their pastoral duties by our preachers, in direct violation of "line upon line, and precept upon precept," in the Minutes of Conference both during and since Mr. Wesley's life-time? They have felt the depressing influence of arbitrary, irresponsible power brought home to their own experience, and they are willing to lend their assistance in endeavouring to effect a reformation. But, although these opinions have been held by the major part of the school teachers and conductors in Liverpool, the schools themselves were too sacred—too hallowed ground for any subject of strife or contention to be introduced into them; and we challenge any of our opponents to bring forward a single instance in which a superintendent, or other officer, has made use of his official situation to promote the objects of the Association. The work of throwing the apple of discord into the hitherto peaceful meetings of the Sunday-school teachers was reserved for the preachers and their party. The following are the facts alluded to.

Since the appointment of a separate Sunday-school committee, several years ago, the annual meeting of the subscribers to the schools has been held on the second Monday in January, to allow time for the Sunday school committee to meet previously, to prepare their report, and transact their usual business. On the present occasion, however, without any notice to the Sunday-school committee, an advertisement was inserted in the *Liverpool Courier* that the annual meeting would take place the following Monday, being the *first* Monday in the year, the very day on which the Sunday-school committee should have met. The secretary of the Sunday schools immediately issued notices, and called together the committee for the Saturday evening previous. These committees having for so long a period been utterly neglected by the preachers, the surprise of the members may be conceived at the sight of not fewer than five reverend gentlemen honouring the meeting with their presence on the Saturday evening. Nothing, however, of a treasonable nature occurred, as they perhaps expected. At the annual meeting, on the Monday following, the Rev. G. Marsden in the chair, after the usual votes of thanks, a list of names was proposed for the Day-school committee, leaving out the name of every individual suspected of holding, or known to hold, liberal opinions, whatever had been their attention to the schools, and inserting the names of some who had never subscribed one farthing, and of others who, although their names had been continued on the committee year after year, never entered the schools, or paid

them the slightest attention. The specious pretext for this was, that the trust deed of Jordan-street School specified that that school was to be under the management of a committee consisting of "accredited" members of the Methodist Society; and as the obnoxious individuals had been expelled the Society, of course they were ineligible. To this it was replied, that this clause, if such clause existed in the deed,\* had never been attended to by the very parties who now brought it forward; that the treasurer, a gentleman to whom the schools were under the deepest obligations for his assistance in a variety of ways; that one of the general secretaries, and one or two of the most active members of the Day-school committee were not members, although not expelled; and that even if the clause were considered binding, it could not, by any implication, apply to Brunswick and Leeds-street Schools, in which there could not be the shadow of a pretence set up that any such obstacle existed. The expelled members also protested against the legality of their expulsion, and maintained that they were still members of Society. An addition to the list was accordingly moved and seconded. After considerable discussion, and various attempts to clamour down the speakers on the liberal side, a division took place, when there appeared for the original motion 33, for the amendment 28, leaving a majority of 5. Every possible means had been made use of to bring up subscribers on the part of the preachers; had the liberals been as much on the alert, the result might have been different. The election of a committee for the Sunday-schools next took place, when the committee of the previous year was re-elected, subject (according to rule) to the approval of the leaders' meetings at Brunswick and Pitt-street Chapels. The question was asked, Supposing the decision of the leaders' meetings should be unfavourable, what would be the result? The reply was, The matter must again be brought before a meeting of the subscribers. After this distinct pledge and promise, our readers will no doubt be surprised to hear, that the committee was never submitted to the approval of the leaders' meeting at all; at the Pitt-street meeting it was never even mentioned. A more summary method was adopted, one more congenial with the spirit of the Conference "usages:"—the Day-school committee met, and, acting under the sanction and by the advice of the preachers, passed a resolution, which will be found below, at once nullifying all that the subscribers had done in reference to this committee, and electing themselves to supersede it. These and the subsequent proceedings met with the decided disapprobation of Mr. Radcliffe, the general secretary, who, though he had hitherto adhered to the party of the Conference, could not witness measures of such a mischievous character, so calculated to impair the usefulness of the institution, without raising his voice against them. It mattered little, however, what the opinion of this or that individual might be; the committee was told by one of the preachers, that "it was no time for punctilios and formalities; they must do their duty." Accordingly, the next step was to eject from office, *sans ceremonie*, all those superintendents who were in any way identified with the Association. Deputations were sent round to the different Sunday schools to

\* A member of the committee applied either to be allowed to inspect this deed, or to be furnished with a copy at his own expense, but was refused.



require them to elect new superintendents; or, in other words, to sow the seeds of discord, to set the teachers in array against their conductors and each other, and to turn what had hitherto been a quiet and peaceful corner of the Lord's vineyard, into an arena of strife and contention. In some of the schools over which the trustees, acting with the preachers, had power, the conductors have been obliged to withdraw, and with them have withdrawn more or less of the teachers and children; in others, where the preachers' party had no control over the building, *they* have been obliged to withdraw, but in every instance the grand principle has been acted upon, "there is a division, there must be a division, and there shall be a division." In the school belonging to Leeds-street chapel, 60 teachers and 270 children have withdrawn, leaving about six teachers and a few dozens of children. In Richmond-Fair school, the teachers, not being willing to elect new superintendents, were informed by the deputation that if they continued longer on the premises they would be considered as trespassers; the whole school, teachers and children, have accordingly withdrawn. In the school at Duncan-street, the room belonging to the Society of Friends, who kindly granted the use of it, the teachers, who although divided in opinion, yet felt for each other sentiments of sincere esteem, wished to sink all differences, and make the school common ground on which both parties could meet on terms of cordiality and affection. The whole of the teachers accordingly united in getting up a memorial, requesting that one of their superintendents, a member of the Association, might not be removed. This, as might have been expected, did not suit the ruthless purposes of this self-appointed committee, who were determined to make root and branch work of it. Accordingly, a deputation attended the school, and without deigning to communicate at all with the obnoxious party, gave peremptory directions to the teachers to meet the same afternoon, and look out and recommend another superintendent. The teachers met, and *unanimously* passed a resolution that they acknowledged the authority of no committee but the regular committee for the Sunday schools, appointed at the annual meeting. Disappointed in their project, this junto next applied to the Society of Friends to deprive the teachers of the use of the room. Here they were again frustrated; the Society of Friends, in their usual clear straight-forward way, refused to grant any such request, and passed a resolution at the annual meeting of the subscribers to their schools, that the use of the room should be continued to the teachers who had hitherto occupied it. The junto, still determined that a division should take place, by representing it as no longer a Methodist school, and belonging to no religious body, induced one of the superintendents and eight of the teachers to withdraw, and open another school under their sanction in the neighbourhood, thus endeavouring, by every means, to introduce dissention and disorder into what had hitherto been a peaceful and happy scene of usefulness.

What, then, were the regular Sunday-school committee to do? The teachers of the different schools looked up to them for countenance and support; the religious education of hundreds of children depended on their decision; they therefore determined not to "betray the trust" confided to their hands, but at once to throw themselves for support on the subscribers. They accordingly have published and circulated the following appeal.

## TO THE SUBSCRIBERS AND FRIFNDS OF THE METHODIST DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN LIVERPOOL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The extraordinary circumstances in which the Schools are placed by some recent proceedings of the Committee for the Day Schools, directed by the Superintendent Preachers, and assisted by some of the Trustees, have laid the Committee for the Sunday Schools under the painful necessity of addressing you in this unusual manner; we therefore respectfully crave your attention to the following observations.

For some time previous to the year 1830 the Sunday Schools had been in a gradually declining state, and very few persons took any interest in their proceedings. In proof of this fact we refer to the following passages in the Annual Report for 1829, page 9:—"The Committee are inclined to think that for some years past Sunday Schools have not, at least in Liverpool, met with that consideration to which they are entitled. It would appear that, while public attention has been increasingly directed to the support of *Day* Schools, *Sunday* Schools have, in many cases, been suffered to fall into comparative neglect. This result, so far as the Committees of the Methodist Schools are concerned, has been, in a great degree, occasioned by the fact, that the engrossing and arduous nature of the duties incumbent on them as visitors of the Day Schools, left them little or no time to devote to Schools held exclusively on the Sabbath." "A certain class of the children of the poor exist to whom the benefits of religious instruction, if restricted to an attendance at Day Schools, must necessarily be totally unknown." "It is an affecting consideration, that the children now contemplated are, of all others, the most in need of Christian instruction. They are as 'sheep having no shepherd.'" The conductors and influential teachers had cause to "weep in secret places" over those desolations which it seemed out of their power to repair, and were often led to consider the causes of decline, and to devise methods of recovery. A want of connexion and intercourse between the several Schools prevented, for a long period, any united counsel and co-operation, until the close of the year 1829, at which time the following extracts from the Annual Report of the Jordan-street School will show the general sentiments which prevailed in the Schools on the cause of their low state, and the remedy which it was proposed to apply:—

[Here follow extracts from the Report of Jordan-street School, which would be too long for insertion, to the same effect as the above-quoted extracts from the general report.]

The other Schools were of the same opinion with regard to the existing evils, and came to similar resolutions as to the remedy to be applied. The Day-school Committee were at length convinced of their own incompetency to conduct the Sunday Schools, and, therefore, gave up all control over them into the hands of the Subscribers, who, at their next annual meeting, appointed a committee for the exclusive purpose of conducting the Sunday Schools.

The great feature in the new Sunday-school Committee was the *increased influence given to those who were engaged in the labours, and, in consequence, most interested in the success of the Schools.* Thus, in the old Committee, the Superintendents of Schools were only admitted by sufferance to give an account of their Schools, and receive the instructions of the Committee. In the new Committee, the Superintendents are *bonâ fide* members. In addition to this, the teachers are entitled to a representative for every 100 children contained in their respective Schools. The tendency of this last regulation was to stimulate them to activity by the prospect of reward, and also to supply a motive of honourable ambition, since any teacher who might be distinguished for his talents and application to duty, was eligible to a seat in the Committee.

To assist in the great business of visiting the Schools, procuring teachers, and aiding with their counsel and advice, twelve other respectable and influential men, taken from the several congregations equally, were added. Then, lastly, to secure, as far as possible, a close connexion with the society and a due degree of pastoral superintendence, all the Travelling Preachers were, by office, members of the Committee, and invariably invited to preside at all its meetings, and a veto was given to the Leaders' Meeting upon the entire nomination.

From a Committee thus composed of all the parties interested in the success, and capable of promoting the welfare of the Schools, and directing its undivided attention and energies to their proper business, it was reasonable to expect that great improvement and extension of the blessings of religious education would result. The event has fully justified those expectations. After the first year's trial of the system, the Subscribers, at their annual meeting, at the close of 1830, thus expressed their opinion of its efficiency:—"On comparing the total number of children in the Sunday Schools with that published last year, it will be found that there has been a gratifying increase of 205. Indeed the usefulness and efficiency of this very necessary and valuable part of the establishment, appear to have considerably increased, and are such as to justify the anticipation of still happier and more extensive results. This the Committee are induced to ascribe to the beneficial influence of the new rules for the management of the Sunday Schools, which were adopted in January last, and are formed on the basis of those recommended by the Methodist Conference. The appointment of a Special Committee, *distinct from*, yet acting *in concert with*, the Committee for the Day Schools, the members of which visit the Sunday Schools in rotation, and exercise a salutary superintendence over them, has already proved beneficial, and has tended to encourage the praiseworthy exertions of the conductors and teachers."

This was no merely temporary impulse, but the commencement of a regularly progressive increase, which is proved by the fact that the number of Schools has been increased, in five years, from seven to thirteen, and the number of those who are receiving instruction therein from 709 to 1,859.

The annual meeting of the Subscribers, held on the 5th of January, 1835, after electing the Committee for the Day Schools, appointed a Committee and two Secretaries for the Sunday Schools, according to the principles on which it had formerly been constructed, and subject to the approbation of the Leaders' Meetings of Pitt-street and Brunswick Chapels.

Lists of this Committee were duly and promptly sent to the Reverend Messrs. Marsden and Jackson, for submission to the Leaders' Meetings. They were, however, *not so submitted, nor any answer returned* to the Secretaries. But after a delay of several weeks a communication, of which the following is a copy, was forwarded by the Secretary of the Day Schools to the Secretary of the Sunday Schools:—

DEAR SIR,—On the other side is the Resolution come to by our Committee yesterday evening. —I remain, yours, with sincere esteem,

Slater-street, 31st Jan. 1835.

JOHN RADCLIFFE.

At a Meeting of the Committee of the Methodist Day and Sunday Schools, held 30th January, 1835. Rev. GEORGE MARSDEN in the chair,

*It was resolved*,—That in consequence of the communication laid this evening before this Meeting, from the Trustees of Jordan-street School, of Brunswick and Leeds-street Chapels, and from the Brunswick Leaders' Meeting, it is the opinion of this Meeting that the nomination of the Committee for the Sunday Schools at the late Annual Meeting becomes null and void; and that the management of the Sunday Schools be, for the present, under the immediate direction of this Committee.

Conceiving that the Day-school Committee might have acted under ignorance, (as the bulk of them are *new men*,) we thought it best, before we took our present step, to reason with them, point out the errors into which they had fallen, and beg of them to alter their plans. This was done in the following note:—

#### TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE METHODIST DAY SCHOOLS.

GENTLEMEN,—Your Secretary has transmitted to us a copy of your Resolution of the 30th ult. by which you declare the nomination of the Sunday-school Committee by the Subscribers, at the Annual Meeting, to be null and void, and assume to yourselves the sole direction of those Institutions. We also find that you forthwith interfered with the business of the Sunday-school Committee, and the Leaders' and Teachers' Meetings, by sending deputations to the various schools, for the purpose of giving notice to the Superintendents of the manner in which you intended in future to govern them. At Leeds-street School the deputation went so far as to intimate that a new Superintendent would be sent from your Committee to that School on the following Sabbath. At Jordan-street Mr. Bridson (one of the Superintendents) was at once deposed, and another placed in his room. The other Schools were also variously interfered with.

We cannot conceive that you have any right to act in this manner, either as regards the Committee or Superintendents, the nomination of both being subject only to the approbation of the Leaders' Meetings of Pitt-street and Brunswick Chapels; and it was expressly stipulated, at the Annual Meeting of Subscribers, that if the nomination then made did not meet with the approbation of the Leaders' Meetings, it should be referred to the Subscribers (in a general meeting to be summoned for the purpose) to make a second election.

We are astonished at the want of due courtesy and respect shown to this Committee by the course you have thought proper to adopt, suggested, as your Resolution states, by "communications" from various Trustees, &c., of the precise nature of which you surely ought to have informed both us and the Subscribers generally, before your present decided steps, in order that, if possible, the whole business might have been arranged in a Christian and amicable manner.

Under these circumstances, we call upon you to rescind your Resolution of the 30th ultimo, and allow the business to proceed in the way dictated by the laws of the Institutions; and we now state that if you do not, in course of Saturday next, convey to our Secretaries a notice of your compliance with this our reasonable request, we shall be under the painful necessity of appealing to the Subscribers at large, and of taking those other steps which, to us, may seem right and necessary.

By order of the Sunday School Committee,

Friday, February 6, 1835.

H. POOLEY, Jun. } Secretaries.  
J. BRIDSON, }

To this remonstrance they condescended no reply.

Thus you have presented to you the strange anomaly of one set of servants to the Subscribers giving a dismissal to another set of servants; the Day-school Committee acting under the authority of the Subscribers, saying to the Sunday-school Committee acting under the *same* authority,—“We will, for the present, take your duties upon ourselves, and you may go about your business.”

Of this transaction one hardly knows which is more surprising—the audacity or the wickedness.

Every person concerned in the Schools is injured by it. First, the Subscribers are injured. They elected the Sunday-school Committee, subject only to the veto of the Leaders' Meetings, and with the *expressed and understood stipulation*, that if the Leaders' Meetings objected to their election, they (the Subscribers) should be summoned to another meeting for the purpose of making a fresh nomination. Yet, in the face of this, the Preachers, some of the Trustees, and the Day-school Committee enter into a combination, set the rights of the Subscribers at defiance, and assume to themselves the dictation of both Day and Sunday Schools, irrespective of those by whose favour they have aught to do with the one or the other! Second, the Leaders' Meetings are injured: they alone are the parties who have a right to pronounce any person unfit to have the management of the Sunday Schools, and to whom the Subscribers have confided the examination of the characters of those whom they appoint. Yet this combination has passed by one of them, and that the principal one, altogether; and, by a piece of miserable trickery, deceived the other so as to get its power transferred to the Day-school Committee. Third, the persons composing the Sunday-school Committee are injured, not only in their collective but in their individual capacity;—collectively, their functions have been interfered with and attempted to be set aside,—and, individually, they are tacitly branded in their character as persons unfit to be entrusted with the instruction of the children of their charge. Fourth, the Sunday School Teachers are injured: they are attempted to be reduced from responsible persons worthy to have a seat in the Committee by which they are governed, and a voice in the enactment of all regulations affecting the Schools in which they labour, to the situation of mere servants to this self-constituted Committee! Fifth, the Children are injured, inasmuch as those by whom they have been hitherto taught in the best knowledge, and watched over as affectionate friends, and, in many cases, as spiritual fathers, are violently taken from their head, and they themselves placed under the care of others, who have hitherto not shown that they are either competent or willing to supply their places.

Here we have a set of men who have pretended to be the only “friends of peace and order” amongst you, who deprecate and denounce all agitation as the worst of evils, themselves casting into our peaceful and (till now) prosperous Schools the “apple of discord,” and by their violent and unjust invasion of the province of our Committee, proving that they care nothing about a breach of the bond of peace, or righteousness either, excepting only so far as such a breach may be against their own interest or consequence. In one or two of the Schools their object will be completely gained: they will acknowledge their authority and receive Superintendents of their appointment, displacing their old and tried friends. In others, the demon of strife will be gratified to the full by the contentions that will tear them in pieces, destroy their prosperity, and “separate very friends.” In others, we fear the Schools will be wholly broken up and ruined; and the remainder will continue under the peaceful direction and diligent superintendence of the Sunday-school Committee.



But what is the cause of these unjustifiable proceedings? The ostensible one is certain *communications* "from the Trustees of Jordan-street School," &c. What the nature of these "communications" may be, they do not condescend to inform us; probably, because they might not, by us, be deemed sufficient. On these "communications," however, in the absence of all information, we make no further remark. The concealed reason, we have ground to conclude, is, that some of the Committee are active members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association; in other words, they are among those who are seeking the reform of those abuses which are now so generally acknowledged to exist. In consequence of which some of them have, by the dictum of the Preachers, been illegally expelled from membership in the Society. Yet they have broken no recognised law,—they have been guilty of no moral offence; there is no charge against them affecting their character, and no allegation to show that their piety is lessened; on the contrary, it is undeniable that they are, in point of qualifications, character, and piety, as eligible as ever they were. "But all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." The "Mordecai," in this case, is the popular constituency by which are they virtually appointed, viz. the teachers in their respective meetings, in which every teacher has a voice, and which constituency prevents the Superintendent Preachers being the "all in all," the "Alpha and Omega."

The regulations of Conference relative to Sunday Schools provide that a part of the Committee shall consist of *persons who worship in the chapels*, but are not members of Society. Why, then, we ask, should these zealots attempt to stretch the cord of discipline tighter than even their masters have ordained?

We shall not here moot the question of the competency of that authority by which, and not by the voice of the church, these valuable men have been expelled, but merely observe, that though so expelled, they have not, nor do they intend, to leave the Society. They meet in class, they attend the chapels, and retain their seats therein, and wait till such a change shall take place in the conduct of the Conference as will open the door for their restoration to their former place in the Body. And are such men to be treated as enemies to Methodism and dangerous to the Schools? Are they to be suspected of a desire or a design to mislead the children? and to be treated as persons whom it is unsafe longer to entrust with the management of these institutions? No, they are rather to be honoured as the founders of some, and the nursing fathers of the other Schools, to whom it is impossible to repay the debt of gratitude that is due to them from all who love the prosperity of Zion.

To the Subscribers of these Schools, and to the friends of education generally, they make their appeal, and ask will they suffer these flourishing institutions to be taken from under the management and superintendence of a Committee, under whose care they have, by the blessing of God, grown up to their present mature state of order and efficiency, and transfer them into the hands of another Committee, which has proved itself incompetent to the task of conducting them, and which, beforetime, permitted them to dwindle into insignificance, and suffered them almost to expire, without an effort to revive their sinking energies?

We respectfully but urgently request all who believe that the Sunday-school Committee is not justly set aside, and who are of opinion they are still worthy of public confidence, to testify it by note, or otherwise, to the Secretaries, and, in order that the Officers, Teachers, and Committee of the Sunday Schools may not be deprived of the means of being useful to their fellow men in that work for which Providence has fitted them, they call upon the Subscribers either to transfer their subscriptions from the Day School list to that of the Sunday Schools, or, in addition to their usual subscription, give their aid to the maintenance of those Schools which are still in the hands of the Sunday-school Committee, and for the commencement of new Schools in neighbourhoods where they are much wanted, and where it is their intention, if they receive encouragement, immediately to commence them.—Thus shall good come out of evil, and God shall make "the wrath of man to praise him."

*On behalf of the Sunday School Committee,*

HENRY POOLEY, JUN., 14, Anson-street, } SECRETARIES  
JOHN BRIDSON, Gloucester-street, }

February 7, 1835.

The Treasurer of the Sunday Schools is Mr. W. M. JOHNSON, Bold-street.

Since the above appeal has been circulated, the annual report for 1834 has come out, to which there is a sort of *postscript* prefixed, asserting that "circumstances relative to the Sunday schools have transpired since the last annual meeting which rendered a partial change in their future management requisite.

"The special provision of the trust deeds of the schools require that their general committee shall, at the time of their election, be accredited members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, to whom the entire management of the Day as well as the Sunday schools shall be committed."

Now if the idea is here intended to be conveyed that the original trust deeds of any of the schools but Jordan-street refer at all to the constitution of the committee by which they are to be governed, the writer asserts what he must know to be untrue; and even the deed of Jordan-street itself has no reference to the Sunday schools at all. The whole paragraph is constructed to convey to the public a false impression, and has very much the appearance of being designedly so constructed.

The writer then goes on to state, that "several of those who were appointed members of the sub-committee for the year 1834 having ceased to be members of the society, &c., the general committee have been under the necessity of taking into their own hands the direct management, for the present year, of this department of the institution," &c.

What the committee of 1834 have to do with the matter, it would be rather difficult, we suspect, to show; the committee, so unjustly superseded, was appointed at the annual meeting in 1835 by the same authority as this junto, who now take upon themselves the sole management of the institution.

But mark the logic of the argument. Several of the Sunday-school committee, says this writer, have rendered themselves ineligible. What then, is there to be a new committee appointed? Oh, no! not at all; we manage these things better amongst the Methodists. It is said that several of the committee have rendered themselves ineligible, and, *therefore*, there is to be no committee at all!! the Day-school committee are to usurp the power into their own hands.

But the flimsy veil of deception has been torn from the designs of those with whom the usefulness of an institution avails nothing when put in competition with the aggrandizement of ecclesiastical domination. The subscribers have responded to the appeal, and we may quote this writer's own words, and say,—“The committee have no ground to fear that any curtailment of Sunday-school operation is to be apprehended from the course now resorted to.” In conclusion, we would ask by what authority, and when, the 4th and 5th of the rules printed with the report for 1834, have been altered from the 4th and 5th in the report for 1833? What dependence can be placed upon the rules of any institution, if they can be clandestinely moulded to suit any particular purpose on any emergency that may arise?

## DR. WARREN.

In a free state religious liberty is absolutely necessary to complete the system of its jurisprudence, for where men already possess the liberty of acting, it would be absurd to restrain that of thinking. In such a government, liberty is the privilege of doing every thing by which society is not injured; and into the very definition of civil freedom, religious liberty necessarily enters. Hitherto we have abstained from noticing the appeal of Dr. Warren to the Court of Chancery, because the objects sought for were not directly connected with those of the Association. The question concerning Dr. Warren, whose bright and eminent talents, and whose high character for virtue, piety, general usefulness, and ability were the theme of the Chancellor's eulogium, more immediately affected the privileges of the preachers; we are struggling for the rights and liberties of the people. The struggles of the Israelites to preserve or regain their independency, which they had from God, were termed insurrection, rebellion, and sedition, because at last they fell under the power of their oppressors. Had they been successful in these struggles, says Dr. Clarke, such offensive words had never been used. Having been unsuccessful in his appeal to Chancery, Dr. Warren, as a matter of course, will have to endure the bitter reproaches of his opponents, and even his best actions will be ascribed to the worst motives. *We* shall also be honoured with a due share of misrepresentation, and whether on *stamped* or *unstamped* paper, their battery of abuse will be opened upon us. *N'importe*. Men can have few better evidences of the goodness of their motives in undertaking any labour, than their having no pecuniary interest to promote by it. Can our calumniators say as much? Are they equally disinterested? It will be matter of high gratification to our readers (who have already, no doubt, read a report of the trial, which our limits prevent us from inserting at length) to find the principles advocated by the Association recognised by the Vice-Chancellor, as will be seen by the following extracts. It having been argued by the counsel for the Conference that the Court had no jurisdiction, and that the question was of little importance, (a fact which, as it regards the main points still at issue between the People and the Conference, is undoubtedly correct,) his Honour proceeded to give judgment.—

"The case had been argued with great ability on both sides, and with much excellent reason. In the statement made by one of the learned counsel, that the question was one of very trifling importance, he certainly did not agree; any question that concerned not only the well-being but the very existence of that numerous body, the Wesleyan Methodists, to whom it was his firm belief was owing a large portion of that religious feeling which had extended not only over this country, but over the whole world, could not be a trifling question: and when the origin and nature of this body were considered, the character of its pious and distinguished founder, and the many excellent men, such as the learned and celebrated Dr. Adam Clarke, who had risen up among them, no person who understood what religion really was could look at such a body as the Wesleyan Methodists without the most affectionate interest and concern. The question he considered the Court called upon to decide was, whether he possessed jurisdiction to interfere in a case in which the trustees of a chapel had virtually excluded Dr. Warren from preaching in chapels to which he had been duly and lawfully appointed. It was stated that this Court possessed no jurisdiction in a question of this nature, but that was a proposition to which he could not accede. It was evident from the provisions contained in the deeds that a trust was of necessity created, and for his own part he could not see, because the trust affected persons who belonged to a voluntarily constituted society, that those trusts were not to be carried into effect by that Court as well as any other. His opinion on the question was, that when persons were created trustees of a chapel, and it did not appear that such chapel was for the benefit of themselves, but held jointly for the benefit of others, that a trust so constituted was one over which that Court would exercise jurisdiction. It then became a question whether, under the circumstances of the present case, the Court was properly called on to interfere."

How justly does his Honour speak of that great and good man, Dr. Clarke! Yet the name of that learned and able critic and unequalled commentator, of

whom the celebrated Robert Hall said, "he was an ocean of learning," was actually struck off the plan, without his consent, by the Conference; and he expressed his disappointment in bitter terms! But he had said of the Leeds special district meeting,—"*The Conference have spent many days in doing the Devil's work, and they have just done it as the Devil wished.*" In speaking of the legality and power of a special district meeting, the Vice-Chancellor says,—

"Whether or not a district committee had the power to dismiss a preacher regularly appointed by the yearly Conference, *was a matter of some doubt*; for the persons who created these rules, having but one general object in view, could clearly understand the general intention, but, not being professional persons, of course they could not foresee and provide for every case of legal difficulty that might arise."

The latter remark of the learned Judge clearly demonstrates the necessity of a revision of the laws; and from it we are instructed that whatever rules and regulations may be agreed to by the preachers, and the delegates of the people in July next, ought to be drawn up by competent professional men. At present it is clear that the Connexion has no constitution, and it would be worse than nonsense to dignify with the name of *laws* those assumptions and pretences by which official characters have been expelled as private members, or by the mere *dicta* of superintendents, who are no sooner worsted in one form than they start up in another, for, Proteus-like, they can assume all appearances. Indeed, the superintendents are now in a wretched plight, unable to defend their opinions, and afraid that they have carried them beyond that point of decency where the credulity of the ignorant ceases to gaze with astonishment, and their apprehensions begin to shake with horror. It is quite impossible that the present system can stand before the fixed and steady eye of the public; and no man in his senses would wish to see the fooleries exhibited at recent mock trials exposed in a court of justice. The Manchester special district meeting, and even the Conference itself, must smart and feel ashamed when reflecting on the following passage:—

"He was of opinion, though the Court did exercise a jurisdiction over trust matters in general, it could not exercise a jurisdiction in the nature of the appellant jurisdiction of a legal court over a voluntary society, who had decided that certain things should be managed in a particular way, by a legally constituted court. Nor did he think he was at liberty to treat their act as an enormity, merely because *in his private opinion he thought differently from a court over which he had no jurisdiction.*"

We beg the reader's attention to the following:—

"He should be sorry to make any harsh observations upon an individual who might be considered as a father in this church, and who bore such an excellent character as Dr. Warren; but being called upon as a judge to exercise his jurisdiction without respect to persons, he must say that he thought his pamphlet contained passages which that gentleman, when a cooler moment should arrive, and he was enabled to exercise a calm and deliberate reflection, would contemplate with regret."

There are few, if any, publications to which this truism might not be applied with equal propriety. But how much more is it applicable to the reverend writers of certain pamphlets published by Mason, 14, City-road, and especially to one of *languid circulation* in this town. We wish his Honour had recommended these reverend pamphleteers to consider the objects and sentiments of the pious founder of Methodism, and to recollect that it was to a society voluntarily attached to himself that he endeavoured to set an example of unblemished holiness, and emanating from the purest faith. Some of these scribblers, in the heat of controversy, have stumbled into the filthiest puddle of impiety; and, even in the estimation of their personal friends, have fallen from a state of respectability to the condition of contempt. We would remind them that among those individuals whom the apostle has mentioned as excluded from the kingdom of heaven, the reviler was particularly pointed out.

On account of its extreme importance we quote the following passage at length: the subject has already been referred to, but it cannot be too deeply impressed on the mind of the reader:—



"His Honour then read the 5th of the resolutions of 1794, to this effect :—'It is agreed that the management of the temporal and spiritual concerns of the society shall be separated as far as the purposes of peace and harmony can be answered thereby, or as they have ever been separated in times of the greatest peace and harmony, viz. :—1. The temporal concerns shall be managed by the stewards chosen for that purpose, &c. 2. The spiritual concerns shall be managed by the preachers who have ever appointed leaders, chosen stewards, and admitted members into and expelled them from the society, consulting their brethren, the stewards and leaders.' This passage his Honour observed seemed to reserve to the ecclesiastical part of the Connexion the fullest powers over ecclesiastical concerns. His Honour then read the Articles of Pacification of 1795, in which he said it was obvious the thing mainly had in view was the subject matters then in dispute in the society concerning the administration of the Lord's Supper, baptism, &c. It was made a question whether the 5th of the regulations as to discipline, that "no preacher shall be suspended or removed from his circuit by any district committee except he have the privilege of the trial before mentioned," applied to all cases of suspension and removal, or to those cases only which occur in the document where this passage is found, that is, the four cases of a preacher being 'immoral, erroneous in doctrine, deficient in abilities, or that he has broken any of the preceding rules.' These were the four cases in which the laity, in conjunction with the preachers, were given jurisdiction over the ecclesiastics. It appeared to his Honour that the passage could only be interpreted by referring it to those four cases. The mode of construction which would render this passage applicable to every case was contrary to the received construction and application of the English language, and involved the blunder of giving, by implication, at the end of these rules a general power to the new tribunal of laity and clergy, whereas that power, in the very outset, was restricted to four enumerated cases, a blunder which no intelligent person competent to use the English language upon any subject could commit. His Honour then referred to the Minutes of 1797, out of which he read a passage to this effect :—'In short, brethren, out of our great love for peace and union, and our great desire to satisfy your minds, we have given up to you by far the greatest part of the superintendent's authority; and if we consider that the quarterly meetings are the sources from whence all temporal regulations during the intervals of the Conference must now originally spring; and also that the committee, formed according to the Plan of Pacification, can in every instance in which the trustees, leaders, and stewards choose to interfere respecting the gifts, doctrines, or moral character of preachers, supersede in a great measure the district committees—we may, taking all these things in our view, truly say that such have been the sacrifices we have made that our district committees themselves have hardly any authority remaining but a bare negative in general, and the appointment of a representative to assist in drawing up the rough draught of the stations of the preachers.' It was impossible, therefore, that these articles could be understood, as was contended, as taking away all authority from a district committee."

Here the imperative necessity of either amending and explaining the old laws, or of enacting new ones, is manifest to the meanest capacity; and this is what we have invariably contended for. It cannot be denied, indeed the foregoing extracts prove beyond contradiction, that for many years the people were led to believe that they derived greater privileges from the Plan of Pacification than, according to the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor, they do now in reality possess. We stop not to inquire whether the "blunders" alluded to were occasioned by ignorance, or by design. The fact stands good, namely, that to carry into effect the intention, or at least the avowed intention, of the two contracting parties in 1797, a revision of the laws is absolutely indispensable. Sir William Horne, counsel for the Conference, with great skill and ingenuity, as regards the interest of his clients, stated the case as "Dr. Warren and the People v. the Conference." No, Sir William; strictly speaking, it was a dispute between Dr. Warren, a preacher, and his brethren, the Conference. The cause which the *Lantern* supports is emphatically the cause of the People v. the Conference, which, we take leave to say, has never yet been tried, and with which Dr. Warren's case, properly speaking, has nothing to do. In the *Morning Post* the judge is reported to advise a reconciliation between the parties. "Possibly the Conference may put an end to this unhappy dispute; perhaps the parties may arrange it among themselves." The

judge gave similar advice in the case of the Attorney-General *v.* Bateman, in regard to the Rev. Mr. Campbell and the trustees of the Tabernacle and Tottenham-court-road chapels. It seems strange that Sir Charles Wetherell did not apprise the judge that Dr. Warren could not appeal to that hopeful body, the Conference, as to an *impartial* tribunal, inasmuch as it is notoriously influenced and governed by the same dominant party that composed the Manchester special district meeting. If the Vice-Chancellor's advice to "arrange matters among themselves," refers only to Dr. Warren's case, we hope it will be immediately adopted, and Dr. Warren speedily restored to the Connexion. But if, according to Sir Wm. Horne, it refers to the People *v.* the Conference, it can only be carried into execution by a deputation of lay delegates to the ensuing Conference, and we are glad to find the Chancellor acknowledge the principle, and recommend the adoption of such a proceeding. But the *Watchman* has sprung his rattle and given alarm. The decision, he says, "completely recognises all those great principles of its executive administration," (the expulsion of official characters on the sole authority of superintendents,) "for which its best friends, supported by the almost *unanimous approbation of the Conference*, have ever contended." Shame on the editor, who, with the evidence of the report of the trial before his eyes, could thus basely and wilfully misrepresent the proceedings of a court of justice! Here we pause, and solemnly warn the Conference of the consequence of proceeding in the spirit betrayed by the *Watchman*. Whoever wishes to observe the effects of violence on the state of religious parties in a free government, has only to consult the annals of that reign which immediately preceded the accession of the auspicious family now on the throne of England. In them we behold a party of the Church, so indisputably the most numerous, that they had good reason to take her name; we behold them persisting, with the most determined obstinacy, in the design of subverting the civil and religious liberties of their country. In this undertaking they embarked with a zeal so fervent as announced their resolution to conquer, or to destroy the Church with themselves; and in the last they might very probably have succeeded, had not the bench of Bishops been wise and moderate men, who were equally resolute to preserve the Church, as bigots were to destroy it. We need not press the argument: there are men in the Conference (we trust a majority) upon whom this historical allusion will not be altogether lost; at least we know some who need not be reminded, that never was there a greater delusion practised on the credulity of mankind than that attempted by the *Watchman*. His Honour thus concluded:—

"The Conference would put an end to the dispute in the course of a short time; and all he would say at present was, that *he had no jurisdiction to interfere*, this being a matter of spiritual discipline, and not a case of breach of trust. He could not conclude better than in the words which were made use of by the Conference in 1795:—'O brethren, be as zealous for peace and unity in your respective societies as your preachers have been in this Conference. Let the majorities and minorities on both sides exercise the utmost forbearance towards each other: let them mutually concede one to the other as far as possible; and, by thus bearing each other's burdens, fulfil the law of Christ. Let all resentment be buried in eternal oblivion; and let contention and strife be for ever banished from the borders of our Israel.'"

The very extensive publicity given to Dr. Warren's case, through the medium of the press, will ultimately be of incalculable advantage to the people, whose cause, in fact, is won when generally known. It remains to be seen what steps the Conference will take, in compliance with the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor, to restore peace and unity "in the respective societies." If they honestly proceed in a plain straight-forward path, all will yet be well. Let them remember, that in all ages the fate of decayed states, and of corrupt lawgivers, has been pretty much alike; the Conference were respected whilst they acted with faith and honour to their friends—and the Greeks preserved their greatness until they lost their virtue.

## PROTEST OF THE LEADERS OF THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT.

The following protest has been sent to the Rev. G. Marsden, the superintendent preacher in the Liverpool South Circuit. This Reverend Gentleman, unlike his coadjutor, Mr. Jackson, who proceeds about the work of extermination with the most gladiator-like *sangfroid*, keeps his victims hanging week after week on the tenter hooks of suspense. Being determined not to avoid expulsion by any unworthy compromise or subterfuge, and desirous of expressing to Mr. Marsden the real position in which they stood, without the possibility of a mistake, they resolved on taking the present decided step. What effect it may produce remains to be seen.

TO THE REV. G. MARSDEN.

DEAR SIR,—After serious and mature deliberation, we have judged it necessary to resolve upon taking a decided course in respect to our brethren who have been expelled from our society. We cannot but deeply sympathize with them, inasmuch as they were not found guilty of any moral offence, and whose character, in the estimation of all good men, is exemplary and unimpeachable. Under the painful circumstances of their case, we think it would be a compromise of Christian principle if we manifested no disposition to see them reinstated in the offices from which you have ejected them, without the *consent of a majority of the leaders' meeting*.

We, therefore, respectfully call upon you to restore them to their former station in the church. We deprecate excommunication on any ground except for gross immorality of conduct; and we consider it a most painful and dangerous experiment upon the peace and liberties of our Connexion. We have not adopted these conclusions hastily; but circumstances have forced them upon us, and we dare not refuse to act upon them. We, therefore, declare that the expulsion of our esteemed brethren commands a prompt expression from us of our willingness to share in their undeserved sufferings; and we solemnly protest against it, as being an arbitrary and illegal stretch of power, which ought to be manfully and conscientiously opposed, either in civil or religious society.

JOHN TAYLOR, WM. SANDERSON, JOHN RUSSELL, WM. BENNION, THOS. JOHNSTONE, SAMUEL THOMAS,	ROBERT HURLEY, WM. JOHNSTON, jun. CHARLES BYRNE, ROBERT THORPE, THOMAS STOREY, JOHN LINDSAY,	WILLIAM COULTHURST, JOSEPH LYON, THOMAS FEGAN, ROBERT DAY, GEO. HOLLIWELL, JAMES MARTIN.
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*Liverpool, Feb. 24, 1835.*

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## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—On Monday evening, March 2, the members and friends of the Liverpool Association took tea together, in the Music-hall, Bold-street. Notwithstanding upwards of 1300 tickets were issued, the demand far exceeded the supply, and the numbers present were considerably greater than the room could conveniently accommodate. A little pressure, however, was easily endured, for the sake of the good cause, and the utmost order and harmony prevailed. Great credit is due to those friends to whom the arduous task was committed of making the preparations necessary for the entertainment of such a numerous assemblage; indeed, the excellence of the whole of the arrangements was gratefully acknowledged by all present. After the tea was concluded a hymn was sung, and a most impressive prayer offered up by Mr. Beattie, one of the expelled leaders in the North Circuit. Mr. H. Pooley, one of the secretaries, next gave the meeting a very interesting report of the proceedings of the Association, and of the encouraging information received from various parts of the kingdom. The meeting was subsequently addressed by Mr. D. Rowland, Mr. Spicer, of London, Mr. Coulthurst, Mr. Picton, Mr. Ledger, and Mr. Farrer, the chairman, and the friends separated soon after ten, highly gratified with the whole proceedings of the evening. Not the least interesting circumstance connected with this meeting is the fact of its taking place on the forty-fourth anniversary of the death of our revered founder, John Wesley. This was purely accidental; but had it been known and commented on by any of the speakers, it would have communicated additional interest to a meeting held for the purpose of aiding and assisting in the present attempts to renovate the system of Methodism, to restore its free spirit, and make it once again what Wesley intended it should be—a blessing to the whole earth. The collection made to defray the expenses, and assist the funds of the Association, amounted to £32 14s. 8d.

*Glasgow.*—The Glasgow Wesleyan Methodist Reform Association have issued an address to the Wesleyan Methodists of that town; it is a spirited, uncompromising document, which goes at once to the root of the evils which prevail amongst us. Lay representation is boldly advocated by them as the only barrier which can prevent the further encroachments of the preachers upon the rights of the people. They say—"It appears to us that the grand cause which has originated these lamentable divisions in the Methodist Societies, is neither more nor less than the want of *lay representation*. This is an evil which has long been a subject of grievous complaint, and has led to many a sad result. Look at the effects of the separation of Mr. Alex. Kilham, and the thousands that then left. The *Primitive*, the *Leeds*, and other bodies of Methodists have either been driven from them, or preferred uniting themselves (not to the old body.) Why? Not because of any difference in *doctrine*, nor in their mode of worship, but with their discipline alone. Add to this the fifty or sixty thousand who, at this moment, are united, and demanding an adjustment of those very grievances which keep the above various bodies separate, and threaten to swell their ranks to such an enormous extent; also chapel trustees, who are struggling amidst the waves of embarrassment and ruin. Had there been *lay representation* in Conference, think you that such evils as these, in which these trustees are involved, would have been allowed to exist? There are some minor evils existing in Methodism, but to these we will not direct your attention, because it is the want of *lay representation* alone which deranges the working of the vast machinery; and, till this is supplied, it will never go on smoothly nor securely."

*Dudley.*—We understand that the trustees of nearly the whole of the Wesleyan Methodist chapels in the Dudley circuit have refused to make, or allow to be made, in their respective chapels, the annual collection on behalf of the General Chapel Fund. The reasons they assign are:—First, That their own chapels are subject to very heavy debts, and that charity should begin at home.—Secondly, That it would be ridiculous for them, holding, as they do, *liberal* opinions on the questions which now agitate the Connexion, to contribute towards a fund from which it is well known the Conference will draw largely, in order to support the trustees of other circuits (such as Ashton) in opposing themselves to the people, and allying themselves with the preachers. We are also further informed, that nearly the whole of the late missionary collectors in Dudley have ceased to solicit subscriptions towards the Mission Fund, and now collect from the same parties contributions towards the liquidation of their own chapel debts.

*Sunderland.*—A feeble attempt was made here, some time ago, to get up a loyal declaration. This roused the liberal part of the leaders, and the result has been a declaration in favour of the reformation of abuses in Methodism, printed and circulated, signed by 103 official characters in that important circuit.

*Ramsey, Isle of Man.*—Extract of a letter from a class-leader in this place:—"The leaders in this town are all of one mind on the subject of Wesleyan reformation. We are all opposed to the proceedings of the Conference party. So far as we are concerned we have made ourselves acquainted with the controversy; and, as we have eyes to see, and ears to hear, no blinking of the main point, no quibbling, no ecclesiastical juggling, on the part of the preachers, can impose upon us. This is *certain*. We are satisfied that numbers of our brethren, leaders, local preachers, and private members, have been expelled the Society by the preachers, in opposition to the declared will of leaders' meetings. This is indisputable; and this is either agreeable to the rules of our Connexion or not. If it be agreeable, we must have the rules altered; if it be not, we must have the preachers checked;—the thing is as plain as noon-day."

When Mr. Robert Newton was in the Salford Circuit, some years ago, our friends at Staley-bridge applied to him in an official manner, requesting him to preach the Sunday-school anniversary sermons at that place. He gave them a flat denial, for *positively he could not come*. This was a terrible rebuff; for, being much in need of some *pecuniary aid*, they wished, if possible, as a set-off, to get a man of *great fame* for their preacher on that occasion. A thorough-bred and thorough-going Methodist, employed in one of the factories, told his master one day how matters stood. This gentleman, though no Methodist, being a friend to religion and the education of the poor, said, "If your superintendent will give me authority, I will try." This was done. He applied—not to Mr. Newton, mind you, but to some *influential friends*, who were to use their *influence* with Mr. Newton; and, if they succeeded in gaining his consent, they were to come with him and bring him in their own carriage to the gentleman's house. By this little scheme the great man was brought for once to preach at Staley-bridge. After a certain time, our friends were in need of *pecuniary aid* again; and Mr. Jabez Bunting was applied to for the same purpose. He also gave a flat denial. Well, the poor cotton-spinner told his master again, who again was empowered to work the *influential friends*; and again their carriage brought this other great man to preach at Staley-bridge. After this, it came to pass on a time that again they stood in need of *pecuniary aid*. On this occasion they fixed their eyes on Mr. Theophilus Lessey. He also gave a positive denial, notwithstanding the Ashton superintendent purposely waited on him in person, at Mr. Lessey's house, in Stockport. Again the poor spinner told



his master, and again the application was made through an *influential friend* in that circuit, and *he* brought the *great* Theophilus in *his* carriage to preach anniversary sermons for the poor children's benefit at Staley-bridge. So much for consistency. Does the *yea* of these men mean *yea*, and their *nay, nay?* or are they of those who are given to change, just as the wind may happen to blow?

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—I beg leave to correct a small error in No. 7 *Lantern*, page 109. It should be,—“I read in my class-book that the following resolution was entered in the Minutes of 1797:—‘We have determined that all the rules, which relate to the societies, leaders, local preachers, trustees, and quarterly meetings, shall be published with the rules of the society, for the benefit and convenience of all the members.’ A new edition of the rules being called for, in executing the above-mentioned determination, the following rules being the most material, are here subjoined.” The above is what was read, and the rule of 97 referred to is that which says,—“No person shall be appointed a leader or society steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a leaders' meeting.

In No. 8, page 124, for “You cannot expel them from the Connexion” read “You cannot excel them in the Connexion!”—Yours, respectfully.

March 5, 1835.

R. THORPE.

### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are requested to acknowledge the receipt of £5 from Lynn, No folk, in aid of the funds of the Association.

The defence of the Declaration of the London Trustees has reached us, and shall be noticed as early as possible.

We are sorry that T. N. of Oldham should have had the trouble of transcribing the letter of John Pawson: we have had it prepared in type for some time, but have been repeatedly obliged to withdraw it through press of matter of more ephemeral interest.


We have by us an old copy of the Rules of the date mentioned by J. P. of Rochdale, to which we shall call the attention of our readers.

In the *Lantern* of February 11, page 94, we gave insertion to a communication from Nantwich, which stated that the Rev. Mr. Tabraham assumed the chair at a meeting of the Temperance Society, without a vote of the meeting. We have since received a note from the Secretaries of the Nantwich Temperance Society, that our information was incorrect. Mr. Tabraham having been regularly appointed to take the chair on that occasion. The circumstance may appear trifling, but we would not, willingly, insert anything calculated, in the slightest degree, to injure the personal character of any individual, whether priest or layman. It is with measures, not men, that we wage the controversy. The name and address of our Nantwich correspondent are in our possession, and we apprehend there must have been some misunderstanding.

We have received from Mr. Gordon, of Dudley, a most excellent address to Wesleyan Methodists at the present crisis, which, after being prepared in type, we are reluctantly obliged to postpone to our next number. In the meantime we shall be happy to receive the continuation.

We have also received the following communications:—*A Leicester Methodist*—G. W.—T. B.—*Letter to the Rev. T. Dunn, by an Old Methodist*, Carlisle—M. M.—*New Basford*—*The Address of the Glasgow Association*—*The Sunderland Declaration*—W. Wallace, Northwich—and letters from Birmingham and Worcester.

In No. 7 of the *Lantern*, page 112, we stated that the Rev. Mr. Sugden was present at the public meeting held in Northwich; this, we have since ascertained, to be erroneous,—it was Mr. Jackson who offered the interruption on that occasion.

 A supplementary number will be published on Wednesday next, March 18.

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Subscriptions will be received by W. SMITH, Esq., (the Chairman) Reddish-house, near Stockport; W. WOOD, Esq., Newton-street, Manchester; at the Offices of the Association, Manchester and Liverpool: and by the Officers and Committee of any Branch Association.

# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER.

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**No. 10.**      WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1835.      **Price 1½d.**

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## ON THE BOASTED CONSTITUTION OF 1795 AND 1797.

Dr. Warren's case is still the general topic of conversation among the Methodist public; and, as the Doctor, by advice of counsel, has lodged an appeal against the decree of the Vice-Chancellor, which will be **THIS DAY** adjudicated upon by the Lord Chancellor, the subject of Methodism, happily for the cause of the people, is likely, for a long time, to engage the attention and excite the sympathy of the religious world. Upon what legal grounds the appeal is made, we know not, but, judging from the tenor of Sir Charles Wetherell's reply before the Vice-Chancellor, it may be inferred that counsel are confident of success.

"If his Honour should entertain the least particle of doubt about the Articles of 1795, he (Sir C. Wetherell) would undertake, as a lawyer, to prove, before any tribunal, or in any court, that the Articles of Pacification were the only proper law, and the court there described the only legal tribunal. He did not hesitate to say, that nineteen-twentieths of the *trash* brought forward by Conference could not be admissible as legal evidence. Such tattling, gossiping, babbling testimony can never be admitted. The proposition he laid down from Phillips's Treatise on the Law of Evidence, and its power to vary or discharge instruments was, that *USAGE could not be adduced to CONTRADICT the provisions of a deed, but merely extrinsically for the purpose of EXPLAINING it.* The argument was applicable to written deeds, even though not under seal. But there was no ambiguity in the deed before him; it was perfectly plain as to the mode of appointment, and that of amoval. If there existed clauses in the code of Methodist law which sanctioned the *trash* and absurdities to which he had alluded, they should be instantly expunged." [This is the very thing for which the *Lantern* has always contended, and will still contend.] "As it was, they could not go back from the rules of 1795 to adopt those of 1791. He was so confident, as a lawyer, of the legal merits of the case, that he would take an issue upon it, and with the deed of 1781, and that of 1826, in which the laws of 1795 were fully recognised, he was convinced that no Judge would allow the laws of 1791 to set the others aside."

If, in the following extract, (speaking of what may be regarded as a personal quarrel between Dr. Warren and Mr. Bunting,) Sir Charles treats the latter with severity, such of our readers as are acquainted with the melancholy consequences which have resulted to Methodism from the adoption of Mr. Bunting's views of Church government, will agree with us that it is with *just* severity. It is, perhaps, not generally known that the Conference, in 1814, prior to the choosing of officers, agreed (contrary to former practice) that all who have travelled fourteen years shall vote in the choice of a president and secretary; and that vacancies in the Hundred shall not be filled up according to seniority, as formerly, but that, when there are four vacancies, three shall

be filled up by seniority, and the fourth by the ballot of Conference, without regard to seniority. It was upon this ground that Mr. Bunting was chosen a member of the Hundred, and thereby became eligible to the office of principal secretary to the Conference, in 1814. To this false step, on the part of the Conference, may be traced the evils now existing in Methodism! "Ambition thus trampling on the rights of the senior preachers, who, by patient labour and long service, were become entitled to admission under the old regulation, but were now rudely thrust back, eagerly seized the propitious moment, and, by a bold effort, leaped first into the Hundred, and then into office, without waiting to take breath! The great object being now realized, the party, for some time, conducted itself with tolerable propriety. They required this time gradually to fill up their ranks, and consolidate their newly-acquired strength. There was, also, still a sufficient number of the old men of weight and influence to command respect; but these gradually declined and died. At length their number became small, and they were soon made to feel the full effects of their imprudence!" We quote from the very able author of the "Reply" to that work of wretched sophistry, whimsically enough entitled the "*Affectionate Address of the Rev. Richard Watson.*" The "Reply" remains unanswered to this day, and is unanswerable; and, we hesitate not to say, that they who have not carefully perused it are but imperfectly acquainted with the nature and extent of the power which has been growing up in the midst of us.

"A question was discussed before the Conference; Dr. Warren claimed his right to be heard; he was heard with considerable difficulty; he afterwards published it, with some remarks. On one occasion he stated that Mr. Bunting 'presumed, amidst the surprised silence of the committee, to insinuate that I (Dr. Warren) was under the influence of some mean, some unhallowed motive in dissenting from my brethren; adding, in a tone and manner peculiarly his own, that my opposition was *the most UNPRINCIPLED he ever knew*;' subjoining, after a pause, 'and I *speak advisedly*!' Now, if a person were to be indicted for a libel, he hardly knew any expressions in a book, on account of which a jury would give a verdict more readily. But, after all, he did not know what the Conference or the Manchester district meeting had to do with it, especially when the Doctor had the respect of the whole district for himself. The gentleman who uttered those libelous words might seek, by sophistical explanations, to do their force away, but there they stood in the book; there Dr. Warren was plainly charged with unprincipled conduct. Any sarcasm which he might have uttered, any severity of language which he might have employed in his pamphlet, is far from being equal to those words used by Mr. Bunting; and if the expressions be somewhat stronger than one could wish, the answer might be that Mr. Bunting, who so accused Dr. Warren, had the main hand in getting up that arbitrary court, and advancing his friend to the rank, station, and inheritance of the individual he had deprived. Surely that could not constitute a legitimate procedure in a competent court of justice! He left it to the judgment of charity and good sense to say if there was any thing in the reply of Dr. Warren, equal in *malignity* to what Mr. Bunting had said of him, or more than any person, so unjustly and uncharitably attacked, might be allowed to use?"

To unfold, with some degree of fulness and precision, the mysteries of Methodism, requires an insight into the workings of the system, which it is difficult to obtain, in consequence of the extreme care which is taken by its leading men to conceal from the public whatever wears not a favourable aspect. Many of the travelling preachers themselves know little of the intricacies and chicanery of the system, and are, therefore, to be held guiltless of much of what we have to charge against the ruling faction. To show that the professed principles of

the latter are at variance with their practice, a thousand instances might be adduced; but let one, for the present, suffice.—When Dr. Warren was called before the Manchester special district meeting, the presence and advice of even one friend (Mr. Bromley) was denied him, as being unmethodistical; but when Mr. Newton was brought to trial, before the Vice-Chancellor, it was quite Methodistical in Mr. Bunting to obtrude his remarks. But let the reader contemplate the ruinous polity of the ruling faction, as it is exemplified in the present state of the Connexion. Here we behold nothing but anarchy and confusion; members of society illegally expelled in all parts of the kingdom, but who, on account of the illegality of their expulsion, have not left, and will not leave, the Connexion; whole circuits broken up by the violence of the superintendents; suits in Chancery; and numerous advertisements for sums of money to be lent on Wesleyan Methodist Chapels! What, too, can be thought of the morality and personal honour of the President of the Conference? First, he declares that the people ought nowhere to express their sentiments except at their quarterly meetings; then he sends circulars to the superintendents commanding them, by every means in their power, to prevent the people from so expressing their sentiments; and, lastly, the preacher's oracle, commonly called the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, treats the universal and rapidly-spreading disaffection as a "late disturbance;" and, as if it had been determined that nothing should be wanting to crown this monstrous duplicity, absurdity, and Jesuitism, the number for January last gravely remarks,—“It is not necessary for us to inquire into the merits of the dispute; it is sufficient to know that the Association has refused to allow it to be settled in the legitimate and constitutional mode long known, acknowledged, and acted upon in the Connexion; for no cause of complaint, *however just or aggravated*, can justify the use of unlawful means of redress. much less can it do this when a *legitimate and competent tribunal exists!*”—Surely such men must either want the penetration to see, or honesty to confess, “the signs of the times.” That ignorant, deluded, and interested men should still cry out for “Methodism as it is,” cannot excite our surprise; but that, under all these awful and appalling circumstances, reverend pamphleteers should so far forget their sacred office as to say, “Our people are possessed of perfect freedom,” would, indeed, be truly astonishing, were not their effrontery, in this respect, far surpassed by their monstrous claims to irresponsible power, on the ground that, by reason of their (*pretended?*) inherent rights, they are accountable to God only for their conduct! A very *convenient* doctrine, certainly; but, unfortunately for the argument of its author, it might be urged with equal force and truth by every petty culprit brought to the bar of justice, who, whatever may be his pretensions or conduct in this world, is accountable to God as well as Methodist preachers. Amidst all this confusion the Vice-Chancellor pronounces judgment. His Honour declares that the people possess no such thing as “perfect freedom;” that the laws under which they vainly imagined, for years past, that they enjoyed protection, were “*contrary to the received construction and application of the English language, and involved the blunder of giving, by implication, at the end of these rules, a general power to the new tribunal of laity and clergy, whereas that power, in the very outset, was restricted to four enumerated*



cases, a **BLUNDER** which no *intelligent person competent to use the English language upon any subject* could commit." How it happened that such gross blunders were perpetrated in engrossing the rules it is now difficult to ascertain, and the inquiry is of little importance, except with the view of avoiding such fatal *blunders* in future. Considering that the uniform conduct of Conference has been directly at variance with the spirit of conciliation, which it was generally thought dictated the Plan of Pacification in 1797, it is not uncharitable to conclude that the "*blunder*" alluded to by the Vice-Chancellor was not altogether the effect of sheer ignorance. Care, however, we doubt not, will be taken by the preachers and the delegates of the people, in July next, to have such revision of the laws, as may be mutually agreed upon, legally drawn up by professional men, with a full and satisfactory guarantee for their due observance by the Conference. On this subject we beg to subjoin a few extracts from the very able letters of the Rev. T. Allin, Sheffield, to the Rev. John Maclean, and recommend the whole of his pamphlet to the attentive perusal of our readers. After recapitulating the circumstances in which the Plan originated, Mr. Allin thus proceeds:—

"The celebrated charter of 1795 was therefore granted, with its subsequent regulations; and which some of your people, *in the simplicity of their hearts*, thought had fully secured to them the rights for which they had so strenuously contended. Glad, Sir, should I be, could I bring myself to believe that *the individuals by whom those documents were drawn up, were actuated by the same unmingled godly sincerity*. But, though much was conceded in appearance and profession, yet the 'chartered rights' were few; and there is too much cause to fear, that, *under an ambiguous phraseology, a meaning was couched, different from that intended to be understood*; while the people were designedly lulled by the supposition that power was given up, *which was only in abeyance, until a fit time should arrive for taking off the veil*, and resuming that which was supposed to have been permanently surrendered. To this conclusion I seem inevitably driven, when I examine the 'charter' itself."

After transcribing the rules themselves from Dr. Warren's "Digest," Mr. Allin continues:—

"Your people, Sir, were here told, that 'the greatest part of the executive government' and of 'the superintendent's authority' was given into their hands. And they generally supposed that, according to these regulations, no preacher could either admit or expel a member, without the *consent* of a majority of a leaders' meeting, and that neither local preacher, nor leader, nor steward could either be admitted, without the approbation of the meeting of which he was to form a part, or removed from it, unless, in the judgment of such meeting, the matter with which he stood charged was both proved against him, and merited such a punishment. So much, they thought, was involved in the protective clauses,—'proved at a leaders' meeting' and 'in conjunction with the leaders' meeting:' more especially when these were among the privileges for which they had strenuously contended, and in reference to which they were told,—'Out of our great love for peace and union, and our great desire to satisfy your minds, we have given up to you **BY FAR THE GREATEST PART** of the superintendent's authority.' Such, I believe, was the view entertained by Dr. Clarke, and by those preachers who, like him, were too noble-minded to stoop to the adoption of a crooked policy to serve a temporary purpose: and for some time the meetings seem to have been permitted to exercise these prerogatives without any direct interruption."

That such were the sentiments of Dr. Clarke is manifest from the truly Christian spirit of liberty which breathes throughout his invaluable commentaries; a work to which Mr. Bunting did not make the slightest allusion when preaching the Doctor's funeral sermon in this town, but which, in spite of jealousy and prejudice, will be read and admired as long as the English language is known. Here we may

remark, on the authority of the *Christian Advocate*, that "a few days before Mr. Benson died, Mr. Bunting waited on him to ask his dying opinion as to the state of the Connexion. Mr. Benson, we are informed, replied, that he had frequently told Mr. Bunting his opinion, but that, as he requested, he would repeat it. He then faithfully declared, that, 'in his judgment, Mr. Bunting was disposed to pursue a policy adverse to the peace and welfare of the Connexion.'

"On close examination, however, it will be found that *the only right distinctly recognised*, as existing in the meetings, is a simple veto on the admission of any member or officer whom the superintendent might propose. With him was still left the exclusive nomination of leaders, stewards, &c.; and in cases of *removal* from membership or office, the laws are either entirely silent, or their language is much less precise. A charge against a member must 'be proved at a leaders' meeting;' and though, among single-minded men, there would be little room to dispute the meaning of such an expression, yet, in some of your courts, and by some of your law-authorities, it has been interpreted to mean—in the presence of the leaders—not to their satisfaction, but to the satisfaction of the superintendent. And, Sir, though this is a construction which the most unprincipled lawyer in the kingdom would scarcely venture to propose to the most ignorant or unprincipled jury to be found in any British court of judicature, yet it seems to be supported by the following singular enactment:—'No trustee, however accused or defective in conformity to the established rules of the society, shall be removed from the society, unless his crime or breach of the rules of the society be proved, in the presence of the trustees and leaders. 1794.'

"The strangeness of this language, considered as the language of legislation, clearly points out the singularity of its meaning, and leaves no room to doubt that the intention of the legislators was to vest *the right of judgment* in some other party than the trustees and leaders, leaving them merely as witnesses, or, should they deem it right to be so, as approvers. Thus the superintendent might allow himself to be influenced by their presence and views, but was not bound by their judgment. And if the same principle be not involved in the following statement, I am utterly at a loss how it is to be understood:—'The members of our societies are delivered from every apprehension of clandestine expulsions: as *that* superintendent would be bold indeed, who would act with partiality or injustice in the presence of the whole meeting of leaders.'

"This declaration professedly refers to the stipulation that immorality is to be 'proved at a leaders' meeting.' In this declaration, however, though it is sufficiently lengthy, not an expression occurs to indicate, either that the *right* of judgment is vested in the leaders' meeting, or that the superintendent is bound by their views, or that, should he give sentence in opposition to their judgment, any law is violated, and such sentence shall be void. He is, indeed, supposed to be awed by their presence, or, it may be, influenced by their opinions; but THIS IS ALL. 'That superintendent would be bold indeed, who would act with partiality and injustice in the presence of the whole meeting of leaders;' and, though the announcement is formally made, that the 'Societies have a full check on the superintendent by means of their leaders' meeting, in regard to the introduction of persons into society;' yet not a word occurs respecting such a check on their expulsion. Such are some of the rights secured by your boasted MAGNA CHARTA; and I fear I may add, such were the deceptions practised on your people by their legislators, in order to allay excitement by a show of liberty, until a fit opportunity should arrive of taking away that liberty, under the sanction of the very laws by which it was supposed to have been given.

"In relation to leaders and stewards, the language employed is somewhat less indefinite. They are not to be removed from office, except 'in conjunction with the leaders' meeting.' But it is easy to see, that by a very trifling extension of the same quibbling, which proves that 'at a leaders' meeting,' does not mean to the satisfaction of that meeting, it may be shown that, 'in conjunction' does not imply concurrence, but connexion; or, as in the former case, 'in the presence' of the meeting. To my mind, too, it seems an ominous circumstance, that, though with respect to 'the nomination' of a leader or steward, it is expressly provided that 'the approbation or disapprobation' shall be 'in the leaders' meeting,' yet in reference to removal, *there is no such stipulation*; and, though the people are afterwards informed, 'There is now no society-officer among us, who can be received without the consent of that meeting to which he particularly belongs, nor can and

officers be appointed, except upon the same plan,' yet on the subject of removal from office, the most profound silence is preserved! So far, Sir, from viewing this as unintentional, I consider it to be the natural or necessary result of the doctrine of 'inherent rights,' and correspondent exclusive responsibilities, as held by some of the then rulers in Israel, as well as by those who at present rule.

"The concessions, some of which were, in law, apparent only, though real in practice, produced, to a considerable extent, their intended effect. Excitement was allayed, jealousies were lulled, and notwithstanding occasional discontents, general peace, and confidence, and prosperity prevailed. But the eye of certain parties in Conference was steadily kept on the diminished prerogative, and a purpose was formed to obtain its resumption.

"The Leeds case, however, in 1827, which formed an epoch in the history of Wesleyan Methodism, supplied the occasion of sounding out more loudly the inherent rights and exclusive responsibilities of the circuit preachers, and of more distinctly asserting the prerogatives of Conference and its representatives. And since that period, the frequent removal from office or membership, by the authority of superintendents alone, demonstrates that the judgment of the respective meetings is, in such cases, looked upon, not as a *chartered inalienable right*, but rather as a *privilege*, the exercise of which is allowed or superseded according to the kindness or lordliness of the preacher, and the real or supposed disposition of the people. To cite all the cases of flagrant injustice, Sir, which have taken place under the operation of this system, is impossible; as the victims have not unfrequently been men whose timidity or poverty, or obscure situation, prevented their voices from being raised, or, if raised, from being heard, beyond the limits of their own societies or circuits. Their cry has gone up to Heaven, where it has been regarded, while on earth they have found but little sympathy, and no redress. Happily, however, through the medium of the *Wesleyan Circular*, and the *Christian Advocate*, many such deeds, which must otherwise have remained in darkness, have been brought to light, and the eyes of thousands of your own people, and of the public at large, have been opened to the practical effects of your despotism."

In another letter Mr. Allin observes,—

"Passing over for the present the circumstance, that some of the privileges supposed to have been secured by that plan were not at all conferred, as your older preachers well know, and as your people at Rochdale and some other places have found out, *your exclusive legislative authority* remains untouched by it: nor is any order of persons among you empowered either to share in that authority, or to control its exercise."

"You, indeed, allow, 'That if at any time the Conference see it necessary to make any new rule for the societies at large, and such rule should be objected to at the first quarterly meeting in any given circuit; and if the major part of that meeting, in conjunction with the preachers, be of opinion that the enforcing of such rule in that circuit will be injurious to the prosperity of that circuit, it shall not be enforced, in opposition to the judgment of such quarterly meeting, before the second Conference. But if the rule be confirmed by the second Conference, it shall be binding to the whole Connexion. Nevertheless, the quarterly meetings rejecting a new rule, shall not, by publications, public meetings, or otherwise, make that rule a cause of contention, but shall strive, by every means, to preserve the peace of the Connexion.' This permissive regulation, as it is easy to see, is calculated only to delude, by a show of liberality, while no real liberty is, in fact, possessed. Any expression of disapprobation is here limited. First, as to time, viz. the September quarterly meeting, when your minutes of Conference, as is occasionally the case, may not have been in the hands of parties affected by the resolutions many days before the holding of the quarterly meeting, and thus an objectionable enactment may not have been observed; or should some have perceived its injurious bearing, there is not time to form mature views and plans, and to prepare effectual opposition. Then the dissatisfaction with any law must be limited: secondly, in extent; for such law is not to be made 'a cause of contention,' either by 'publications, or public meetings, or otherwise,' a restriction this, by which opposition is prevented from becoming formidable by concert; while opponents are debarred from obtaining a correct knowledge of their own strength. And after all, should any majority of meetings, however great, oppose, there is entire liberty reserved to confirm the law at the ensuing Conference, after which it becomes a part of Methodism, and a term of communion; and to oppose it is to become obnoxious to the charge and penalties of rebellion.

Your legislative authority is thus rendered exclusive and absolute; and, as you are not bound to consult any class of persons respecting what you shall do, so neither are you responsible to them for what you have done."

When a majority of the quarterly meetings object to such laws, they ought not to be carried into execution at any time,—the people should be allowed a *veto*.

We hope the reader will agree with us, that enough has been quoted to justify the Association in demanding a revision of Methodist laws.

## DR. WARREN AND THE CONFERENCE.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—The result of the late trial is, by this time, no doubt, extensively known, and the feelings of the Methodists of England have been, of course, variously excited. Already have we heard in the streets of Manchester the loud rejoicings of an interested party, and particularly the hope that, in consequence of this event, the designs of the so called "vile promoters of the Association" will be frustrated, and brought to an end. But, Sir, allow me to assure you and your numerous readers, that, *instead of being discouraged by the result, we are rather cheered*, and our determination is more strong than ever to persevere in the *good cause*, until the laws of our beloved Connexion be remodelled, and placed on a more scriptural, and, consequently, more just and permanent foundation than what they are at present.

On reading the judgment of the Vice-Chancellor, and the reasons which, he assigns, brought him to so singular a conclusion, there are two observations which cannot fail to strike the minds of all impartial individuals, and particularly those who have intimately studied the history of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, namely—1st, The gratuitous remarks he thought proper to make on the pamphlets of Dr. Warren; and 2dly, The palpable ignorance displayed by his address of the laws and economy of Methodism.

That the Vice-Chancellor displayed great want of knowledge with regard to the history and laws of Methodism, may not, perhaps, excite very great astonishment, when we consider the ignorance which has characterized the lay members of that Society, with respect to the rules by which they are governed; but that the Vice-Chancellor should have so far forgot himself as to have departed so widely from his *judicial course*, and condescended to have become the avowed advocate of Methodistical discipline "as it is," and, moreover, have had recourse to humiliating personalities, is, indeed, to be, for his own sake at least, lamented. Why, let me ask, did not his Honour, previous to censuring the pamphlets of Dr. Warren for their "unseemly" and "indecent" expressions, take the trouble to examine pamphlets written, or virtually approved of at least, by the individuals whose character and conduct he was so warmly defending, and which contained expressions much more pointed and severe than any which the Doctor has yet written? Why attribute motives to certain of his remarks, for instance, the one alluded to in reference to the President of the Conference, which, on the face of it, was as different in meaning from the one given to it by the Vice-Chancellor as light is from darkness, an interpretation on his, which was, to use his own phraseology, as "unseemly," certainly, as any thing which he chose, in his zeal and sense of justice, to reprobate! *The decision, however, of the Vice-Chancellor, is appealed against, and the case is already removed to the Lord Chancellor's Court.*

If the Lord Chancellor should finally decide in favour of the Vice-Chancellor's opinion, what does it prove? Why, simply this,—that the constitution we have hitherto boasted of as being so excellent, if judiciously enforced, is a mere



chimera, a shadow without a substance; in fact, no constitution, except such a one as gives to the preachers all the governing power, and to the people only the privilege of submission. Verily, such a constitution is, indeed, worth having, and one, too, which the preachers themselves will, I dare say, regret the possession of!

"If, therefore," said the Vice-Chancellor, "in the progress of time the persons who are for the time being the trustees, receive a person appointed by the Conference into their chapel, they receive him upon a tacit general obligation, that they themselves shall conform to the general rules at that time prescribed by the Conference for their government!" What then becomes of Mr. Vevers's statement,—*"That the constitution of Methodism was fixed by mutual agreement, between the members of the Conference and the 'Delegates of the People' in 1795, and is found in what is commonly called the Plan of Pacification?"* (Vide Vevers's Appeal.) Our constitution is, by the Vice-Chancellor's decision, set at nought, and subject to the interpretation of Conference. What a solemn mockery of justice and equity! But there is some comfort remaining. What does his Honour next say? "Now, it really appeared to him, that though the Court did exercise its jurisdiction over trusts, *yet it had no appellant jurisdiction over the local court of a voluntary society, which had chosen to establish a tribunal of its own.*"

Here, then, it is clear, we are, in the eyes of the law, a voluntary society, having formed our own laws, and, of course, having found them to act inefficiently and unjustly, we have the undisputed right to make new ones. *Let those members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society who are sorrowing for the abuses existing in their Connexion take the hint, and maturely consider the necessity of demanding a new and more efficient constitution.*

In confirmation of the unjust proceedings of Conference, I have now to unfold a very painful circumstance, proving to a demonstration the aggressions which the Conference have, of late years especially, been exercising towards the people. It is well known that certain preachers have, of late, been arrogating to themselves a most unscriptural power,—a power, indeed, formerly claimed by the Conference, but conceded in the Concessions of 1795 and 1797, viz., that of expelling members and leaders, against the express remonstrance of a majority of the leaders, at their official meetings. This power has again been usurped, under the plea that our rules only demand that any charge brought against a leader or member be "proved at," or in "conjunction with," a leaders' meeting. Thus, it is asserted to be the province of the leaders to determine whether Brother so and so attended such a meeting, and that of the preachers to decide, and expel or otherwise on such decision, whether the unfortunate brother was guilty of any crime in doing so. Now, it so happens to have come to light, that this very assumption of power was equally a source of complaint in the memorable days of 1795, with the arbitrary suspension of a minister, without the consent and approbation of the people.

The consequence of these grievances was, the assembling of a large number of delegates from all parts of England, in order to demand their redress. There being some difference of opinion between the assembled delegates respecting a closer union with the Established Church, a small division of them separated, and presented a separate address to Conference. The larger body of delegates presented the following grievance, amongst others, for the redress of Conference:—

*Resolved*,—That no leader or steward be removed, or any new leader or steward be chosen, without the concurrence of a majority of the leaders and stewards, at a meeting called for that purpose.

(Signed)

"Manchester, July 28th, 1795."

"MATTHEW MAYER, President,

"WILLIAM PINE, Secretary.

The lesser division of delegates had, however, the same end in view, although expressed in somewhat milder language:—

“We think preachers should not attempt to change or appoint leaders and stewards in opposition to the general judgment of the rest of their brethren.

Signed, “MICHAEL LONGRIDGE, Sunderland,”  
and 15 other Trustees, July, 1795.

In reply to these appeals, the Conference agreed to the Plan of Pacification; at least so much of it as published without the “Addenda.”

“The delegates,” says a publication now before me, and issued by their authority very shortly afterwards, “immediately entered into a particular investigation of the above propositions, and were unanimously of opinion, that they were by no means calculated to obtain a ‘General Pacification,’ without considerable alterations. They therefore sent the following note to the Conference, signed by the president and secretary:—

“‘Dear Brethren,—We have received your propositions and articles of discipline. As they very materially differ from our views on the subject, we request you will inform us, by nine o’clock on Monday morning, whether we are to consider them as your *ultimatum* or not?’”

On Monday morning the delegates had an interview with the committee deputed from Conference, the result of which was the grant of additional concessions on the following morning, (Tuesday,) which are those found in what is usually called “Addenda.” Amongst the “Addenda,” we find the following:—

“It has been our general custom *never* to appoint or remove either steward or leader; without *first* consulting the leaders and stewards of the society. We are resolved to walk by the same rule.”

It would seem, however, that words similar to “It has been our general custom,” did not satisfy the delegates, for in their published documents they say, “The delegates still thinking that the above ‘Addenda’ was not sufficiently explicit in some of the articles, came to the following resolution:—

“‘2. That instead of the fourth addenda, we resolve that the following be inserted,—‘That no leader or steward be chosen without the concurrence of a majority of the leaders and stewards, at a meeting called for that purpose, at which the assistant preacher shall preside.’” And

“‘That the above shall be sent into Conference as the *ULTIMATUM* of the trustee delegates.’”

The result of this firmness will be seen by referring to the Leeds Concessions of 1797, and particularly to the published rules of the Connexion, printed by Story, and sold by “Whitfield, City-road, and at the Methodist preaching-house, 1800.” In the 5th page of this publication we find the following rule:—

“*But no leader or steward can be put out of his place but by a majority of leaders, or a quarterly meeting; NEITHER CAN ANY MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY BE EXCLUDED, BUT BY A MAJORITY AT A LEADERS’ MEETING.*”

What can be more clear and expressive than the design of this rule; and what more contrary to the *unscriptural*, and, as it is now incontrovertibly proved, *illegal* proceedings of the Conference in this respect?

The concession of this power, it appears, did not accord with the desires of Conference or its representatives, and to their eternal disgrace be it said, they changed the construction of this rule, in a few years afterwards, and at a time, too, when the people were lulled into a state of security. In order to prove that I am not making groundless assertions, I will appeal to the “General Rules,” published at the Book-room in the year 1808, printed by Story also, and sold by the bookseller who succeeded Mr. Whitfield, viz., “Thomas Blanchard, City-road, and at the Methodist preaching-houses.”

In page 11 of the publication we find the following:—

“*No person shall be appointed a leader or society steward, or be removed from his office, BUT IN CONJUNCTION WITH A LEADERS’ MEETING, the nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the leaders’ meeting.*”

Thus was one of the most essential and valuable privileges mercilessly wrested from us, and the very ground-work of our liberty undermined. And this false rule is the foundation of the power of expulsion, so arbitrarily acted upon of late by several of our preachers. I leave the inference to your readers, simply concluding, in the words of the Rev. Mr. Emmett, the patriotic preacher, who has so nobly come forward in the cause of religious liberty :—

“I would put the question seriously to our preachers, and ask them upon what principle can they wish to retain and exercise a power so injurious to its possessors, and destructive to those over whom it is exercised? Tell me not of the rights and liberties of the people,—neither of the charter gained by the “giants” of 1797. As for our once-boasted charter, I seriously ask,—what is it? *Where evil can be committed with impunity, the charter is a falsehood, and liberty is a vain word!* Can any individual who is acquainted with the melancholy instances of misrule which are occurring in our Connexion, deny that evil has been committed with impunity? *Of what real value, then, I ask again, is our charter?*”

Believe me, Dear Sir, yours, sincerely,

Manchester, March 7, 1835.

RALPH BARNES GRINDROD.

### EXPULSION OF T. P. ROSEVEAR, ESQ. BY THE REV. A. BARBER.

Mr. Aquila Barber has had the hardihood to expel, by summary process, Thomas P. Rosevear, Esq., of Barn Park, the most influential member of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion in Cornwall, the friend of the late Dr. Adam Clarke, and of all that are, and all that is, both great and good. But we will leave our correspondent to narrate, in his own nervous and pithy style, the circumstances of this atrocious and ill-judged exercise of priestly power :—

“We have struggled, fought, and conquered, as a Circuit; and have sent the ‘arrogant suffragan’ to seek his bread and butter *elsewhere*.”

“On Sunday, the 22d ultimo, this jesuitical tool of the Lords of Conference daringly excommunicated T. P. Rosevear, Esq., and *in his own freehold chapel* at Boscastle, despite of the remonstrances of the leaders and other friends; though, at the same time, cautiously alleging, ‘that it was not for any immoral act!’ He did not even assemble the leaders’ meeting! This excommunication is the most atrociously daring act of despotism yet perpetrated by our inglorious priesthood.

“On Monday last, however, a multitude of our Circuit officers came nobly to their posts, at the King’s Arms Inn, in this place, as early as ten, a.m., and debated and arranged for their future course. Fifty-eight dined together at twelve o’clock, and at two, went in a body to meet the priest, who declared to them, after a six hours’ hot debate, that he had never seen before such a mass of excellent, clever, intelligent men, as he had found in the officers of this Circuit. They certainly *pinned* him like free men fighting for their civil and religious liberties. He, at length, after a world of cant, and tergiversations beyond precedent, decided that he *could not*, and *would not*, give Mr. Rosevear his ticket, nor restore his name to the Local Preachers’ Plan; yet, with all his caution on the score of *negative expulsion*, he at length slipped out—‘Mr. Rosevear has no business in this meeting!’ though Mr. Rosevear was standing upon a valuable property, on account of which he and his brother are, as trustees, deeply involved. He had calculated, it appeared, on Mr. Rosevear *not* coming to the meeting, and on his (Mr. Barber’s) having at least four supporters. He lost *all these!* for two excellent men at length united with us, and the other two turned so decidedly *against* him, that we are all but united. About eight o’clock, p.m., the cry was raised, ‘To your tents!’ Off we went to the inn, after giving the priest notice on the spot that our connexion with him ceased from that day. A committee was immediately appointed to arrange for working the Circuit *without* him. He has gone off to the Bishop of Plymouth, for a new conference with him and his *high-toned* men, who *advised* the perpetration of the daring act of getting rid of ‘this disturber of the West by *any means!*’”

It, therefore, appears that Camelford Circuit, as well as Warminster and others, has been broken up by the violence of the superintendent.

## TO WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

## LETTER I.

BRETHREN,—I think the present is a period which brings the serious and deep consideration of Wesleyan Methodism, in the form of obligation, before all persons connected with that system. Events now occurring call for decided and general action, and events which are likely to occur may utter that call with a more imperative voice, and it is surely of importance that that action should be directed by clear information and undoubting conviction on the points to which it may relate. It might at first sight appear that the last statement would be willingly adopted by all the parties engaged in the present Methodist contention; that each of them, being sincere in their efforts, would desire the diffusion of knowledge as the most effectual means of preparing those whom they would wish to influence, for acting in their favour. If such were the case, I might immediately proceed to the explanation and illustration of those matters in which I think the truth with regard to that contention lies, I am, however, met, at the threshold of an investigation into the affairs of our community, by attempts to restrain the exercise of free discussion, which oblige me, ere I enter upon what *should* be the main subjects of dispute, to charge the party, to which it is well known I am opposed, with endeavouring to accomplish their ends by keeping their partisans in ignorance, and criminating their opponents for the diffusion of knowledge. I suppose it is so notorious, that no individual professing acquaintance with the subject will deny it, that most of the persons who have lately been expelled from the Wesleyan Societies in Liverpool and Manchester, have been so treated for having violated the following rule:—"Let no man, or number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new till it has been first appointed by the Conference." Such expulsions divert the controversy between the reformers in our Connexion, and the advocates of things as they are, from its legitimate subjects. Before the former contend that certain alleged abuses should be corrected and remedial measures adopted, they have, if it should be thought necessary, to defend the abstract right of examining abuses and remedies at all, and bringing them in any form under the notice of those who may be interested in them. Their opponents would entertain a very foolish notion of the controversy in which they are engaged, if they should imagine that, in the case before us, it was likely to be confined to the question of fact whether the rule quoted above was actually a law of Methodism or not. *That* is certainly a point of controversy, and I think I could successfully contend that such rule had no legal force, but the question to be debated extends far beyond that point. The rule involves a general principle; its advocates must, in consistency with its terms, uphold the doctrine,—that no man or number of men have a right to attempt the production of what may be thought, in the exercise of a judgment separate from the will of the Conference, to be beneficial reformation; and the question immediately arises, whether the enforcement of such a monstrous doctrine be not such an interference with liberty as puts an end to all reasonable contention whatever, and substitutes in its place arbitrary domination on the one part, and unqualified submission on the other. It would be ridiculous to declare that that question could be answered otherwise than in the affirmative.

Brethren,—There are matters in dispute throughout the community of which you form a part; you are called upon by both of the contending parties to act with reference to these matters; yours should at least be *enlightened* action; to this end you must obtain information: the matters about which you act must be with you the subjects of discussion. One party which desire your co-operation in their favour denounce and prohibit discussion, and will criminate and punish you for indulging in it, such is *their* view of the way in which the business is to



be carried on ; unfettered debate and free inquiry are to be put an end to ; truth stated and applied is not to be a weapon of this warfare, if *they* can prescribe the mode of contest. If you contend with them on their own terms, you must oppose positive *resistance* to a demonstration of *power*—such is the condition to which the ministers of your churches, assisted by some of your Christian brethren, would reduce you. The attempt is not concealed ; he that runneth may read it. I will not now argue in defence of men who oppose this tyrannical conduct, knowing that when it is practised every liberty they may possess is at stake. I will ask what is the view which such conduct should give us of the *cause* of their opponents ? or rather, what is the view which it proves those opponents *themselves* entertain of their cause ? What principle is it which thus arrays itself against discussion ? Is it love of truth, or love of power ? Is it honesty, or deception ? Is it admiration of the system, or is it shame ? Is it confidence, or is it fear ? I wish to state this matter clearly. A man who endeavours to prohibit others from discussing with him subjects in which he and they are both interested, must, I conceive, be either conscious of the erroneous nature of his opinions, or of his personal inability to defend them. When such prohibition is, as in Methodism, endeavoured to be made part of a system, the conviction of personal inability must be discarded, of course, and the prohibition becomes a tacit declaration of the untenable character of *the system*. Remember, I have not rested my argument, as perhaps I might have done, upon any individual attempts, however general, to prohibit investigation in the regular meetings of the societies, nor upon the advice which certain declarationists have, in godly language, it is true, given to their neighbours to abstain from discussing the subjects in dispute ; I have referred to a law which the Conference party have published and acted upon, as a part of their system ; a law whose observance is, in their view, *essential to church fellowship*. Finding the position I oppose in such a form, I thus bring it forward as one, the conclusions drawn from which are legitimately chargeable upon the cause which that party espouse. It was necessary that I should thus plainly state the point to the illustration of which this letter has been devoted, in order that the relative position in which I stand toward the party to whom I am opposed should be understood. They having, in the way I have shown, thrown their cause out of the court of reason, my appeal will not be made to *them*. (Alas ! I wish that the slanderous attempts which they have made to injure private character had not placed a still more insuperable barrier in the way of such an appeal !) *They* have endeavoured to reduce the affair to a contention of physical strength. Is it not so ? Why are individuals expelled in Liverpool and Manchester ? Because the matters in dispute were discussed and decided in the proper meetings ? No ! but because the preachers had brute force on their side, wherewith they could support their tyranny ! Why am I, having done that for which others have been cast out, still a member and officer of the Methodist Society ? Because the superintendent of the circuit in which I live has permitted reasonable discussion, and co-operated with the people in the conduct to which such discussion led them ? No ! but because the numerical force arrayed against him cannot be safely encountered. Why should the superintendent of Dudley, holding the same opinions as they do, shrink from doing what the superintendents of Liverpool profess to think it is their conscientious duty to perform ? Because it is not conscience or reason, but power which turns the scale. I appeal not, therefore, to my opponents ; I appeal, Brethren, to you ; I come before you with this advantage,—I profess to state clearly, to illustrate and argue upon the points I may notice, not to dogmatize upon them ; I will, as plainly as I may, bring before you my views of the subjects which now agitate the Wesleyan Societies. My object is truth and peace, not the peace which is not based upon truth, nor the truth which does not tend to peace, but both harmonized in their proper relations. May God defend the right !—I am, yours, affectionately,

Dudley, February 26, 1835.

JOHN GORDON.

## REV. W. BRAMWELL.

The following remarks of that pious and eminently useful man, the late Rev. William Bramwell, may not be considered inapplicable at the present period :—

“As ministers of Christ,” he says, “we are too much upon the money system; and from that, by some determined act, we ought to effect an immediate deliverance.

“A bad effect is produced upon the ministry, through the minds of the preachers being perplexed, to procure temporals, by collections, &c.; begging, it is to be lamented, is too much the business of the year. How can I raise the moneys? appear fair at Conference? &c., are considerations, which, it is to be feared, affect some of us more deeply than the salvation of souls. A preacher has been known to labour two years in a circuit, without ever being questioned concerning the spiritual state of the people. The inquiry has uniformly been,—‘Did you make the collections?’—‘Have you got the money?’”

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REV. JAS. DIXON AND  
Mr. W. MORGAN.

In No. 7, of the *Lantern*, page 107, we inserted an account of the expulsion of Mr. W. Morgan and other leaders in the Liverpool South Circuit. On the Wednesday evening following Mr. Dixon attended Mr. Morgan's class, for the purpose of appointing another leader, when the following proceedings took place. We insert the account, as it tends to show that the expelled leaders, agitators and designing men as they are represented to be, have managed to preserve the esteem and affection of their respective classes :

The Rev. JAS. DIXON brought Mr. P. Williams to the class. They arrived whilst the leader was looking for a hymn, when Mr. Dixon asked Mr. Morgan if he meant to lead the class?

Mr. MORGAN.—“Yes, I came for that purpose.”

He gave out the hymn, and after prayer was going to address the members, when

The Rev. Mr. DIXON said,—“Brethren, Brother Williams is appointed your leader; Mr. Morgan has given it up.”

Mr. MORGAN.—“You are not correct, Sir. I have not, nor do I mean to give it up. You know, Sir, I was not tried as a leader, but as a private member.”

The Rev. Mr. DIXON.—“I will hold no conversation with you. Brethren, you see what a disturbed state the society is in, owing to these men.”

Mr. MORGAN.—“You are again not correct, Sir. It is owing to the preachers.”

No answer.

Mrs. TAYLOR, a member of the Methodist Society for more than fifty years, rose and said,—“Sir, I am not afraid of man, but love and fear God. (She was full of zeal, yet kept her temper.) I have many times heard Mr. Wesley preach, and you ought to be ashamed of yourselves. You have turned out the best men of the society, the pillars of the church; take care it does not fall upon you. You ought to be ashamed. My leader (Mr. Morgan) is an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. His God shall be my God, and his people my people. He is always here at the appointed hour of class-meeting, and gives us good advice; and when sick, or in trouble, he visits and comforts us, and prays with us. As long as I have been a Methodist, never a preacher came to see me at my house.

The Rev. Mr. DIXON.—“How can I preach to such people! I must withdraw.”

Mr. MORGAN.—“You had better know the minds of the people before you go.”

The Rev. Mr. DIXON.—“I must withdraw.”

He then withdrew, but returned again, and said,—“Brethren, I come back to inform you that there is no charge against Mr. Morgan’s character or piety. I wish you a good time.” He then went away.

Mr. WILLIAMS said he might also withdraw, and hoped they would not be offended at his coming; it was against his will.

Mr. MORGAN.—“You had better know the minds of the people, as to whether they will have you for their leader or not.”

He spoke to several, and the answer was, “No,—no,—no,” &c.

Mr. WILLIAMS asked the leader how many were in the class; he answered fifteen, but wished him to stay till some more came. Mr. Williams said that he had spoken to the majority. He then shook hands with Mr. Morgan, wished them a good time, and bade them good night.

They afterwards held a prayer-meeting, and the Lord was with them.

### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—A meeting of the Hibernian Society, instituted for the purpose of establishing Schools and promoting the spread of the Gospel in the benighted parts of Ireland, was, last week, advertised to be held in the Music-hall, Bold-street: notes to this effect were sent round to the different places of worship in the town, to be published from the pulpits. Some of these notices, as it has been usual in former years, were sent to the Methodist Chapels. The very name of the *Music-hall* (being the room where the meetings of the Association are held) was wormwood and gall to the preachers; very sagely concluding, therefore, that nothing good could possibly emanate from a place which has become such an abomination in their eyes, they actually *refused to read the notices from the pulpits*. Marvellous, however, to relate,—notwithstanding the withdrawal of the countenance of such august and important personages as Messrs. Marsden, Jackson, and their subordinates, the meeting really took place; and, more astonishing still, their support was never missed,—the speakers consisting principally of clergymen of the Church of England and Dissenting Ministers.

On Sunday last the Rev. D. M’Nicol published, from the pulpit of Leeds-street Chapel, that the Lord’s supper would be administered after the evening service; he also stated that the tickets of the members would be strictly examined; and after dwelling largely on the wickedness of division and schism, he said, in substance, that if any attempts were made by persons not *accredited* members to remain; if there was any *indecent* behaviour, the sacrament should not be administered at all; nevertheless, if any *seriously disposed* persons wished to stay, they might receive notes of admission by applying in the vestry. A pious woman, a member of Mr. Brook’s (one of the expelled leaders) class, wishing to remain, applied in the vestry for a note. Mr. M’Nicol was about to give her one, when he was informed that she met with an expelled leader. He then refused to give her a note of admission. The poor woman told him that she understood him to say, that any seriously disposed person might be admitted, and thanked God she had been seriously disposed for thirty years. “Now,” said she, “if you refuse me admittance to the Lord’s table, you are not a man of your word.” It was all, however, to no purpose; having adhered conscientiously to the leader and the people amongst whom she had been blessed, she was not deemed worthy to partake of that communion which ought to be free to all the people of God.

Methodism has hitherto been considered as being supported by the voluntary contributions of its members. The following fact may, perhaps, throw some light on this subject:—A class was met for tickets, last Sunday se’nnight, by the Rev. Samuel Jackson. After the tickets had been distributed, the preacher asked the members round what they would contribute to the yearly collection. One young man stated that, under present circumstances, he could not conscientiously contribute any thing. After a good deal of altercation and lecturing on the part of the preacher, the affair terminated in demanding the ticket of membership back from the contumacious individual. The present motto would appear to be,—“No yearly collection, no membership.”

*Heywood, near Bury.*—On Friday week upwards of 300 Wesleyan Methodists attended an Association Meeting in the Wesleyan Sunday School-room, Heywood, near Bury, John Heywood, a veteran of forty years’ standing in the society, in

the chair. The speakers were Messrs. Grindrod, Greenhalgh, and Hughes, of Manchester, who all advocated the cause of Methodist Reform. There are 520 Wesleyan Methodists at Heywood, and more than nine out of ten, it is said, are determined to support Dr. Warren; in consequence of which, the Rev. P. Garrett, superintendent, has intimated that he will leave the circuit next Conference. Meetings of the same sort are expected to be held at Rochdale and Bury, as soon as the Doctor returns from London.

*Stockport.*—The *Christian Advocate* is authorized to state, that a gentleman in the Stockport circuit, who is a trustee of six Wesleyan Methodist Chapels, intends to retire from the trusts, and to demand an indemnity from the remaining trustees.

*London.*—A meeting of the trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Liverpool-road, Islington, was convened on Thursday week, for the purpose of proposing resolutions condemnatory of the "Christian Retrospect" contained in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for February last. Mr. Lessey presided, and refused to put the resolutions, or to vacate the chair: they were, however, carried without his aid. Then he proposed a compromise, and promised that, if the publication of the resolutions were postponed till Thursday next, he would engage, by the evening of that day, to release the dissatisfied trustees (five of the six present) from their responsibilities, there being a debt of £4500 upon the chapel, of which the trustees cannot meet the interest. The proposition was accepted; and thus the matter stands for the present.—*C. Advocate, March 9.*

*Warminster.*—This little circuit has been all but broken up through the arbitrary conduct of Mr. Blundell, the superintendent. Out of thirteen local preachers, only two remain with him; and out of nine chapels and preaching places, he has only the control of three.

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#### TO OUR READERS.

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The *Watchman's Lantern* was originally set on foot as an experiment. Its projectors, considering the excitement which had for some time existed in the Methodist societies, and aware of the anxious desire for information on Methodistical topics which pervaded the whole country, "from Dan to Beersheba," were of opinion that a cheap publication, devoted exclusively to the present subjects of controversy, might not be without its use in the fierce struggle which is now waging for the protection of liberty of conscience, and freedom of speech against the encroachments of irresponsible power and ecclesiastical despotism. The principal ends designed to be answered by this little work were the following;—First, to disabuse the public mind of any false impressions which might have been made respecting the objects and motives of the Methodist Association, by the unworthy insinuations and foul slanders which have been so industriously circulated in the pages of the *Methodist Magazine* and other publications, and, we grieve to say it, from the pulpits of the Methodist chapels also. Secondly, to expose to public animadversion those arbitrary acts of priestly domination which have recently occurred in such frightful numbers, and which, if not publicly held up to the odium they deserve, would be speedily consigned to oblivion, whilst their evil effects remain, like a blighting canker, destroying all that is worth possessing of our religious privileges. Our third object was to promote that union and co-operation amongst our societies in the work of Methodist reformation, so necessary in every step of an undertaking of such magnitude and importance. To this end, our publication was designed to form a centre, to which might converge information from all quarters at all bearing upon the subject in hand, again to be diffused throughout the length and breadth of our country,—that not a single Methodist might be unacquainted either with the existing evils in Methodism, or the proposed means of their redress. These designs, to a considerable extent, have been, and still are, answered by the *Christian Advocate* newspaper, to the editors of which paper all who wish well to the cause of the Methodist people are under deep obligations; but still a small, cheap work was requisite, which, without at all interfering with any political questions, might give the requisite information respecting the proceedings both of the Conference and the people, and gain access to the cottages of the poorer members of society, who constitute the most numerous, and, perhaps, in the last resort, *really* the most "influential" class of the Methodist people. We stated that for these purposes the



*Watchman's Lantern* was established, as an experiment. The experiment has been tried, and has exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of its projectors. Our circulation has been constantly increasing since the commencement. From the Land's End to Edinburgh—from the mouth of the Thames to that of the Mersey—there are few circuits into which our *Lantern* does not throw its light. The effects have already begun to manifest themselves. Wrong and injustice, once exposed, must eventually sink under the overwhelming influence of public opinion. A mighty movement has already begun to be made, which bids fair to terminate in obtaining for the people the recognition and restoration of those rights and securities which the strong arm of clerical usurpation has for a long period kept in abeyance.

The *Lantern*, not having been established with any view to profit, was originally published at its present low price that it might be within the reach of the poorest of our members. Had its circulation been confined to Liverpool, Manchester, and the immediate neighbourhood, it might have paid the expenses of publication, and perhaps something more; but paradoxical and strange as it may appear, with a circulation extended to distant parts of the country, the expenses have increased in a much more rapid ratio than the corresponding returns. To explain this seeming anomaly, we need only observe that the *Lantern*, not being on stamped paper, cannot, of course, be transmitted through the country carriage free, and as, under present circumstances, the friends of Wesleyan reformation in distant places wish to have their information at the earliest possible period, we are under the necessity of sending our parcels by the most expeditious, and, of course, the most expensive routes; indeed, it has happened, not unfrequently, that the expense of carriage has actually amounted to more than the cost of the parcel.

Under these circumstances, we are compelled to make a small increase in the price, which will, in future, be **TWOPENCE** each number. We are sure that all who wish success to the cause in which we are embarked will cheerfully contribute this trifling advance. Had the *Watchman's Lantern* been a private undertaking, we might have felt some little diffidence in respect to this subject; but, as every individual connected with it executes his task without any other fee or reward than the consciousness of having done his duty, we are sure that all persons who feel an interest in the present conflict will do theirs, by continuing to support, in this and every other practicable way, the cause of truth and justice.

The *Watchman's Lantern* will continue to be published, as hitherto, every Wednesday fortnight, price Twopence, with an occasional supplementary number; and we shall feel obliged to our friends in distant circuits for the continuance of their correspondence, and the communication of any information connected with the state of the Methodist societies.

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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In our next we shall endeavour to give some account of the expulsions which took place in the Liverpool South Circuit in the course of last week.

We feel at all times obliged to our correspondents for their very acceptable favours. May we take the liberty of requesting them to be as brief in their communications as the nature of the subject will admit, as we are frequently obliged to postpone or omit letters, on account of their extreme length, until the subject ceases to be interesting. Some communications now before us, if inserted, would each occupy from six to ten closely printed pages of the *Lantern*.

The next *Lantern* will contain the continuation of Mr. Grindrod's Address; Account of the expulsions and consequent proceedings in the Northwich Circuit; Letter from R. T., of Junction-house, near Stourbridge; and Mr. Pawson's dying Advice to Conference.

 No. 11 will be published on Wednesday, the 25th of March.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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**No. 11.**      **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1835.**      **Price 2d.**

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TO WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

## LETTER II.

BRETHREN,—I have professed to bring before you the present contention in Methodism in that form which seems to me to embrace the truth of the case. When thinking upon the controversy, as a whole, I find considerable difficulty in selecting the point at which I may most effectually commence my observations. From this difficulty I am glad to be relieved by some remarks in a publication called the *Illuminator*, which professes to answer a speech I delivered at Liverpool in January last,—a publication which, according to advertisement, is circulated by the Methodist preachers in Great Britain and Ireland. I shall not trust myself to characterize the allusions to personal character which that publication contains, and on account of which I am sorry and ashamed that it should thus have been sanctioned by the Wesleyan ministry. Whatever, in the remarks to which I have just referred, bears upon the argument I may conduct, I will fairly meet; and I would have replied to his observations in the form and order in which they occur, and thus entered into personal contention with the writer of these remarks himself, but for the ungentlemanly language, to say the least of the matter, which he has occasionally employed. Such expressions as “vile men,” “false and slanderous insinuations,” “Satanical malevolence,” &c., used in the manner they are, throw their utterer altogether out of my range. I freely allow myself incompetent to answer blackguardism.

The subject professedly discussed in the part of the 4th number of the *Illuminator* devoted to my speech, is the constitution of the Methodist Conference. I had asserted that “the Conference is unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body.” I gave my reason for thus judging, and the sentences containing that reason are quoted by the writer. “Individuals placed under any government, whether civil or ecclesiastical, should, as a matter of natural right, have a share in that government.” “The Conference is composed solely of ministers, and is, *therefore*, unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body.” “Besides this *general principle*, that government should be so exercised that all the governed should have a share in it,” &c. Strange it is—though I am not disposed to imitate this author's example, by calling his declaration “false and slanderous”—that, after penning such quotations, he should declare, “The orator does not state *in what* this injustice consists.” I would charitably suppose that the remarker did not consider any thing as a reason but that which he felt himself qualified to answer. As, therefore, there is nothing offered in reply, I shall, as far as this part of the subject is

concerned, merely enlarge the argument stated above by a few plain observations.

The spiritual welfare of all the individuals who are associated together is the object for which the societies of Methodism are formed. I hold it as right that, such being the case, the arrangement of the business which is necessary to be transacted should, in some satisfactory way, be in the hands of all the persons concerned in it. What relates to the whole community should be conducted by the whole. What relates exclusively to any particular part, should be conducted, according to some equitable plan for that purpose, by all those composing that part. The system of Methodism, on the contrary, is one which, as far as possible, throws the conducting of all its affairs into the hands of the preachers; all interference with, and check upon, whose proceedings by the people, is, as much as it can be, excluded. Why should this be? Why should the power by which the general good is to be promoted be possessed and exercised by a *part* of those benefited without the choice or interference of the rest? Is not the *whole body*, expressing its voice representatively or otherwise, *most likely* to consult best for its own benefit? And have not those to whom the regulations of the community apply, the same right to exercise their united judgment with regard to such regulations, as individuals have to interfere in conducting the affairs of civil government? The superior importance of religious to civil matters will but give strength to the application of the principle of popular interference, if it be a *just* one; and the higher office and work of the ministry cannot, equitably, be set up in opposition to the *RIGHT* of the whole community. The *body* is to be benefited; for this they voluntarily unite themselves together;—who, among men, has a right to decide for them what is consistent with their benefit but themselves? They may decide wrongly; so may those who assume the government over them: in *this* they, *at least*, stand upon an equality with their irresponsible rulers; but who but themselves have a *RIGHT* to make the decision? a *right* derived from the facts that it is their *own interest* which is to be promoted, and that the people are naturally and morally as independent with regard to its promotion as their ministerial brethren are. If *they* choose to put their welfare into the hands of any party, that party will enjoy the power in consistency with their *rights*; but the *right* to choose is theirs, and their right is violated when any persons, though they should be ministers of the Gospel, endeavour to stifle the voice with which they express their choice, or fetter the exertions which, in consistency with that right, they make for their own welfare.

Brethren,—Do not forget that the arrangements for which the adherents of the Conference contend in *the church* are arrangements which, when connected with *the civil government*, are denounced by the patriot as altogether destructive of the liberties of the country; forget not that your preachers are an *aristocracy*, which there is no popular body to keep in check; and judge their conduct as you would judge the conduct of the *aristocracy of this country* when it had armed itself with *despotic power*. Why is it that priestly hierarchies have been, invariably, the supporters of arbitrary power in the kingdoms where they dwelt? Why is it that the “eclectic” politics, advocated by the Conference newspaper, are the politics of tyranny hiding its iron strength under the ecclesiastic’s gown, and smoothing its un pitying

features with a saintly smile? It is for *the principles of universal freedom* which you have to contend;—freedom which may be smothered by the velvet cushion of the pulpit pressed upon her mouth.

There is much involved in the exercise of this popular right which makes the subject before us one of the utmost practical importance. Why is this ecclesiastical power so obstinately contended for on the part of the priesthood? Is not one reason because the power itself is *an interest*, and because there are other *interests* naturally connected with it? Why should *one part* of the body take to itself all these interests? In as far as they may be in themselves good, or may be turned to what is good, the community are deprived of advantages for which they may be equally qualified with their clerical brethren, when this power is systematically confined to *an order*, and withheld by *virtue of a caste* from all the rest. When a part of a community is invested with the power of acting for the whole, the rest being deprived of effective interference, how natural is it that the interest of that part should be put in the place of the interest of the whole! How great is the probability of this in the case before us, when, according to the testimony of Scripture and experience, power and its consequents have a natural tendency to interfere with what is spiritually advantageous! The temporal interests connected with this power are most likely, when the system is thus arranged, to be pursued not *as means*, but *as ends*. Are there no instances of the honours of the Connexion being distributed by the Methodist preachers as *ends of personal advantage* rather than as *means for the general welfare*? Evils may at least be connected with the exercise of this as of all other power. What check is there upon those evils, when the power is thus systematically confined to a part of the community? To talk about the check of gospel obligation is folly; the question is, what check is there upon men *who are liable to neglect the fulfilment of that obligation*? They cannot be depended upon for checking themselves; for the evils into which they, *as a party*, are liable to fall, are the kind of evils to be dreaded. Nothing, from the nature of the case, but such a general supervision and interference which will result in the arrangement of the business according to the will of the whole body, can be hoped to correct such evils.

Methodist preachers can hardly expect, with any hope of success, to defend their exclusive system of government, on the ground of the *inherent right* of the ministry to rule; because, the local preachers, to whom the practice of exclusion applies in all its force, are equally ministers with, and possess all the rights derivable from, the ministerial office to the same extent as the itinerants. If, however, such a right should be referred to, I would have you to keep in mind that the subject of dispute is not ministerial qualifications, and the responsibility to God which such qualifications involve,—but it is a *right to govern* a particular body of people; and, the nature of the case requires, that such a right should be *arranged* by mutual agreement between the parties concerned, according to the principles of *justice* and *equity*, and not *assumed* by one of those parties. The principle for which I contend is one which I have stated to be *consistent with equity*. If the writer in the *Illuminator* had kept in mind the distinction to which I have just referred, he might have saved himself the trouble of recording many sentences with which he has mystified the subject in the fifth number of that publication. “The New Testa-



ment," we are told, "furnishes no platform of ecclesiastical government at all." If such were the case, would it follow that the principles of justice and equity are not concerned in the arrangement of that government?—Are men to submit to a *despotism* because the New Testament has not propounded a system of church rule? But, in opposition to the opinions of our author, founded upon this general assertion, I contend that the principles—the "germinant principles"—of which he speaks, fully embrace the doctrine of popular interference in the government of the church. If I were to allow that "the term elder is uniformly used in the New Testament, in relation to persons holding the ministerial office,"—yet, it is to be remembered, that there are others, beside elders, who are said, in the New Testament, to have interfered in church arrangements. It is said, for instance, that the "*whole multitude*" interfered in the appointment of deacons; and, "*the whole church*" were concerned in settling the dispute about circumcision.—Circumstances these which this writer seems to have forgotten. I readily answer the question,—“Will Mr. Gordon have the kindness to tell us what part of the sacred code the union of the Wesleyan preachers in Conference violates?” As at present constituted, that union violates the command of our Lord,—“Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.” A command, the reason stated for the observance of which proves that it was addressed to the whole body of those who acknowledge Christ as their Master, and which is expressly declared (Matt. xxiii, 1) to have been spoken by Jesus to *the multitude and his disciples*. The right for which I am contending is *thus* clearly recognised in the *Scriptures*, as well as established on *principles of equity*. The assertion, then, on which the writer in the *Illuminator* founds the chief part of his observations on this subject, is altogether beside the mark. “Then the question as to lay-eldership or delegation is altogether reduced to a matter of *expediency and utility*.” Is it not? The question of popular interference with the government of the church, in an effective manner, (the plan of which I do not at present lay down,) is matter of natural and scriptural *right*. The manner in which this "*expediency and utility*" are attempted to be shown in favour of Conferential domination is passing strange. The proof seems to rest upon such assertions as "we have no doubt," "we therefore imagine." The consistency of this writer's doubts and imaginings may perhaps be inferred from these two sentences, which stand very near together:—"We *do not affirm* that this corruption of Christian doctrine and loss of genuine religion has been *occasioned* by *lay elders*!" "We *have no doubt*, though unable to trace the thing historically, that the connexion between *lay eldership* and this denial of the faith once delivered to the saints, exists as *cause and effect*!!" Facts will not bear out these doubts and imaginings, if they were consistent with themselves. They refer to the points that lay interference may have destroyed the purity, and fettered the prosperity of the religious communities with which they have been connected, and the history of Presbyterian Churches and the New Connexion is referred to as an illustration. Now purity of doctrine has been preserved in connexion with popular interference to a far greater extent than it has been destroyed, or than it has been preserved under circumstances which can be fairly brought forward in comparison, *without*

such interference. The present state of Independent and Presbyterian Churches throughout these kingdoms will prove the *former position*, and the history of the Church of England will establish the latter. Besides this, a departure from the faith can be much more reasonably traced to the *ministers* than the *people*. With the former, in the cases to which this writer refers, the information I have on the subject leaves me to conclude it almost invariably commenced, as the propagation of the *Arian* doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, as descriptive of the mode of his divinity, *has commenced* with the Methodist Conference.\*

As to the small progress which the New Connexion may have made, and which is another point touched upon by our author, the fact that that Connexion has had from the beginning to contend with the most determined and unscrupulous opposition on the part of the Wesleyan preachers—men who make the vain boast that they “*do not exist for the purposes of party*”—is a much more reasonable cause for the deficiency, if deficiency there be, than the existence of lay delegation. But all such comparisons as these are out of place,—the interference of the people, as stated above, being matter of RIGHT!

I must here abruptly close this letter. If any thing in it should seem not sufficiently established, I trust you will not conclude that it *cannot be* established, till the whole of my argument on the subject is closed. For instance, it is necessary that more should be said in proof of the position that Methodism, to the extent to which I have stated, excludes popular interference. To the clear establishment of that position I will proceed as soon as possible, and I trust I shall be able to show that what bears, at first sight, the form of such interference, is so ordered as to be merely the *show* of that which the people should *really* possess.

I am, yours, affectionately,

Dudley, March 16, 1835.

JOHN GORDON.

\* Lest I should be misunderstood, I would here distinctly state that I believe the term Son of God is used in the New Testament with reference to the divinity of Christ, though I do not believe that it designates the *mode* of his divinity.

#### DR. ADAM CLARKE AND THE CONFERENCE.

In No. 8 of the *Lantern*, p. 128, we inserted an anecdote illustrative of the late revered Dr. Clarke's opinion of the decision of the Conference on the Leeds question, which, it would appear, has made an impression, from the wincing and writhing of our opponents under it. Their anxiety to disprove the fact has called forth one of the most amusing exhibitions of vanity and self-importance we have seen for some time. A Mr. Samuel Hickling, of Birmingham, has addressed a letter to the Rev. John Waterhouse, for publication in the *Illuminator*, to the effect that Dr. Clarke never used the alleged expressions—to him! Mr. Samuel Hickling is, no doubt, a very respectable gentleman; but since we never made use of his name at all, and were not, indeed, previously aware of his existence, his chivalrous attempt to perform what has hitherto been considered an impossibility, namely, to prove a negative in reference to the direct testimony of others, seems quite unnecessary. An Irishman once had the *misfortune* to steal a pig. When brought

to trial for the crime, five witnesses deposed to having seen the theft committed. "Sure," said Patrick, "I can bring five and twenty to swear they never saw me take it." On a similar principle Mr. Samuel Hickling seems to act. Let him recollect himself. Is there no other gentleman, a trustee of Methodist chapels, at whose house the Doctor occasionally sojourned? All that his letter proves is simply that the Doctor had more prudence than to admit *him* into his confidence. We have satisfactory authority for the anecdote, or we should not have given it insertion. Since the editor of the *Illuminator* considers it such a "choice morsel," we will here repeat it. Dr. Clarke, when in Birmingham, after the Conference of 1828, stated, in the presence of *two* most respectable witnesses, "*that the Conference had been doing the Devil's work, and had done it just as the Devil wished.*" Should the editor of the *Illuminator*, or the Rev. G. Marsden, still doubt the truth of what is here stated, if they will give themselves the trouble to call at the office of the Association, Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool, we will give them proof that even their sceptical minds shall not be able to resist. By the bye, is Mr. Samuel Hickling quite sure that he never heard the anecdote before? Nothing is further from our intention than to impugn his veracity; but why all this soreness lest the cap should be thought to fit him?

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### PROCEEDINGS AT NORTHWICH.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—We take the liberty of transmitting to you the following facts:—In consequence of the Rev. Mr. Sugden refusing to put certain resolutions to the vote, at the quarterly meeting, the society steward of Frodsham called a meeting of the whole society, which took place on the 30th of January, at the Independent Chapel, Northwich. William Wood, Esq. of Manchester, was called to the chair, and after several of the Northwich local preachers had addressed the meeting, Dr. Warren fully explained the principles of the Association. For this heavy offence brother Griffiths, of Middlewich, was expelled, on Monday, the 2d of February; and on the ensuing Monday, the 9th, brother Edwards, of Frodsham, was very informally expelled; and on Wednesday, the 11th instant, three of the brethren, Thompson, Wallace, and Parry, were arraigned before a meeting of leaders and trustees. After the superintendent had brought the charges against them, he asked whether the meeting was satisfied that the brethren before them were at the meeting, upon which Mr. Wild replied and said "You seem to be satisfied for us, and admit the fact for us." Mr. Thompson then insisted on the propriety of a defence of the conduct of the members implicated, when Mr. Sugden peremptorily declared that it was not a meeting for discussion; upon which he was again asked whether a defence would be allowed, to which he replied "Were you there or not?" and without any further delay pronounced the brethren, Thompson, Wallace, and Parry, expelled from the Methodist Society. It is rather a singular circumstance that the town steward for Northwich was the only witness against the parties arraigned, and he only could testify to his brother-in-law, Mr. Thompson, so that Messrs. Wallace and Parry were condemned without a witness! At this crisis the vestry became filled to excess with members of society, who rushed in with such earnestness that the person who stood at the door to prevent their entrance declared that he might as well attempt to stop the sun in its course as to prevent the people from rushing in, who, being indignant at the superintendent on account of his conduct, testified their disapprobation in such a manner that he became quite alarmed at the opposition with which he so suddenly found himself surrounded. The opposition and clamour increasing, Mr. Dignum moved, "that the meeting now adjourn to the body of the chapel," which, being seconded by Mr. Fowls, was carried by acclamation. The chapel being lighted up, and order restored, Mr. Sugden, through much entreaty, made his appearance, and then addressed the multitude: "This is no place for discussion, nor can it be allowed; but since you

are assembled we will sing a few verses, and some of you can pray ;" and instantly, with the greatest *sang froid*, gave out—"Before Jehovah's awful throne," &c.; when Mr. Thompson said "We will not sing." Mr. Sugden then, with the greatest unconcern, said "Then, if you are not disposed to sing, let us pray." "No,—no," resounded through the chapel, "it is solemn mockery, in such a spirit." He then said, "If you will neither sing nor pray, I must go, I can do no more here;" when Mr. Wallace, who was on the seat just before him, apparently labouring under severe indisposition, supported with a staff, thus addressed him:—"Sir, you astonish me beyond measure; you can do no more, you can say no more. What! can you do nothing to allay the awful excitement which you have this evening produced? Say nothing to satisfy the people? Now mark me well, if you neither can nor will do any more, I am resolved you shall hear more. You seem entirely unconscious of what you are doing. Look round this chapel, Sir, and call to mind the days that are past. In what state did you find it when you came among us,—was not every seat and passage filled to suffocation? In what state was the society,—did not peace reign in our borders? Of the work of God,—was not prosperity crowning our labours in the conversion of sinners? And what is it now? Let these empty seats, these deserted walls, answer, and tell it to your heart. Who stopped the work of God? You, Sir! Who scattered our lovely congregations? You, Sir! Why? Because, you were unable to distribute to them the spiritual food which they had been in the habit of receiving under this roof, and which you were lawfully expected to do; therefore are they scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd: but, Sir, this is not all; not satisfied with scattering the congregations in every part of the circuit, you have now begun to tear the flock itself in pieces, and scatter the bleeding members of Christ on every common. Is not the language of one of your tribe applicable to you in the fullest sense of the word:—'The mar, local or travelling preacher, whoever he may be, a sheep-stealer is a saint compared to a man who scatters flocks of Christian societies which he had never gathered.' After some further remarks from Mr. Wallace, Mr. Sugden, accompanied by Mr. Jackson and Mr. Fowls, rose and left the chapel.

Mr. Thompson then ascended the pulpit, and told the congregation that, as Mr. Sugden had refused him a hearing, he would make his defence to them. He said he had inquired of Mr. S. by what law he was to be tried, but received no satisfactory reply. After some further remarks, Mr. T. continued—"I shall briefly relate to you, my brethren, how it came to pass that we have appended to our Methodistical laws the tyrannical law by which so many excellent men have of late been expelled from the Wesleyan body. In the year 1794 the uneasiness which had for some time prevailed in the Connexion was made visible by the appearance of a great number of delegates in Bristol, during the sittings of Conference, with addresses from the people. The Conference did negotiate to a certain extent with the representatives, but the history of Methodism proves it did not satisfy the people, for the Connexion was generally and greatly convulsed the ensuing year. In the year 1795, the 52d Conference began in Manchester to take into consideration the plan to be adopted to restore the peace of the Connexion, and produced what is called the Plan of Pacification. In the following year the Conference sat in London, and, after having only the year before agreed to the Plan of Pacification, gave birth to that prodigy of wisdom for which the Conference advocates are such sticklers, 'Let no man, or any number of men, call meetings, circulate letters, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, unless first appointed by the Conference.' A precious portion of legislation, which might have done tolerably well for the boors of despotic Russia, but it stands as a monument of degradation on the Minutes of Conference; and when we read it, it makes one feel indignant at the low cunning of a party who wished to bind the shackles of slavery on Englishmen. But the scheme was too bad to be acted upon, and it naturally raised the indignation of the people, and the Connexion became more fearfully convulsed than ever, and to such an extent that a division of about five thousand members actually took place; and, for fear of a much larger division, the Conference most unwillingly granted the concessions of 1797, which abrogated the oppressive law of 1796, and allowed to the leaders' meeting not an opinion merely, but also a vote. After the unbounded scope for the exercise of private opinion allowed by Mr. Wesley to his members, is it right to condemn any Methodist for the utterance of the same? Again, we are told that the quarterly meeting is the medium of conveying our opinions to Conference; but our quarterly meeting was entirely blocked up. By whom? By the upholder of priestly domination! I would also observe that the accuse



should come into court with clean hands, whereas I have three distinct charges against Mr. Sugden of having broken the constitution of Methodism, which I am prepared to prove before either district meeting or Conference if allowed so to do; while on the other hand it is very doubtful whether I have broken any *known* law in Methodism."

Brother Parry then addressed the congregation, and stated that although his citation was forwarded by a local brother on the Friday previous, yet that brother had not the courage to wait upon him with it, but had sent him the summons through the medium of one of his workmen, just on the evening before his trial; thus leaving him without time to prepare a defence for himself.

[We are sorry that our limits do not permit us to give the whole of Mr. Parry's address.]

After proceeding, at some length, to show that the conduct of the Conference and their agents was opposed to Scripture, and exerted to put down the free expression of opinion, he concluded by stating that he had protested against such unprincipled and unrighteous conduct, and he was not ashamed of the part he had taken in the present struggle for religious liberty, and hoped that he should, in the spirit of prayer, still maintain his position.

Mr. Wallace then entered upon his defence.—"Men and Brethren,—It is not my intention to occupy much of your time, being well assured that nothing which I may be able to advance, will, in any way, affect my case, or alter the fiat which has already gone forth against me, by those who differ from me in opinion, but as an important duty necessarily devolves upon me, and as I owe that duty to you, to myself, the church generally, and the world, I shall explain myself a little. The line of conduct I have, and am pursuing, is the cause for which I now stand not merely arraigned or condemned, but expelled before you this evening. Now I do maintain the principles which governed that great and good man, Mr. Wesley, principles which he maintained with unshaken constancy to the close of a long and useful life, and as laid down in the first Conference ever held, in 1744. "Every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account of himself to God. This is that great principle on which all our reformers proceeded; and further than this it is undeniably certain a Christian cannot submit, either to bishop, convocation, or to a general council." This is the foundation on which the whole superstructure of my principles rests, and by which you are to judge of my conduct, for by these I stand or fall. It is no broken reed, no phantom of the imagination, and no spider's web. That reform is necessary in the Methodist Conference, is a fact but rarely denied, however men may differ about the mode or time when or how it should be effected. But if the most strenuous advocates of order and rule would but give the subject a calm and dispassionate consideration, they would at once see its utility, and adopt those measures that would lead to its speedy and certain success. You may talk about legal means, petitions, &c. until your tongues cleave to the roof of your mouth, and what would it avail? Just nothing! Look at the declaration of the preachers, the same in substance as that given by my Reverend accuser at my last trial: and what was it? *'Yield! no; no we will never yield to any power; we would sooner, in a body, mount the burning pile,—men, women, and little ones, and at once cease to live, than thus be stripped of our glory and our joy. Yield! no; not one inch, if all forsake us!'* Brave men. And yet they tell us, in clear and distinct language, in the Plan of Pacification, that "out of our great love for peace and union, and our great desire to satisfy your minds, we have given up to you by far the greatest part of the superintendent's authority." *Smooth language!* What power have they given up? It is true they do not receive any members into society without your consent; but there is good reason for that part of their conduct. What leader would unite a member with his class, unless he approved of such a member? How has it been with the expulsion of members, leaders, or local preachers? Is it so here? No, no. In the face of overwhelming majorities, yes, single-handed and alone, where no immorality could be charged, much less proved, have they, in defiance of all law, expelled worthy officers, &c., men far superior to themselves in point of moral worth. What can be expected from such a juggle as the Plan of Pacification? I fearlessly defy any man to produce such another piece of ambiguity in the English language, or even in the dark archives of the Spanish Inquisition. Every part of the same, which has any reference to power, are like the answers of heathen oracles, to be turned any way. For instance, that rule,—"No trustee, however accused, or defective in

conformity to the established rules of the society, shall be removed from the society, unless his crime, or breach of the rules of the society, be proved in the presence of the trustees and leaders.' 1794. Now, the evident intention of these legislators was to beguile and mislead, and vest the entire power in the superintendent alone. Not in the leaders? No. Not in the trustees? No; these, however wise and holy, were only to hear it proved, and not to give their judgment. No, they are merely to hear it, and approve of it they think fit; if not, they must not open their mouths. It is the same with members, leaders, and local preachers.

"Allow me to ask, How long is this state of misrule to last? How long will you be blind to your interest? Who was it that sacrificed ease and health in raising your falling cause and recruiting your declining numbers? Who were your most active agents and faithful servants in gathering sinners to the fold of Christ? Your hired servants, or, I should say, *your masters*? No; it was the very men who are in different parts of the circuit, who are sacrificed to priestly domination and worse than papal tyranny!"

After the brethren had delivered their defence to the congregation, which was received with the greatest attention, and a protest having been drawn up and read by one of the leaders, a resolution was then moved by one of the trustees, and seconded by a leader and trustee, that the sentiments it contains were approved of, and that it should be presented to the chairman. When put to the vote, the people unanimously declared in its favour and adoption. The late society's steward then placed the protest on the table, and eighteen local preachers, trustees, and leaders present affixed their signatures to it. The protest was duly presented to Mr. Sugden, at the ensuing leaders' meeting, by one of the leaders present. The following is a copy of the protest presented to Mr. Sugden, in the presence of the trustees:—

*Northwich Feb. 11, 1835.*

We, the undersigned, being leaders, trustees, and local preachers of the Northwich Wesleyan Methodist Society, having had submitted to us charges which have been preferred against our esteemed brothers in Christ, Messrs. Thompson, Parry, and Wallace, for having attended and taken an active part at an illegal meeting, held on the 30th January, conscientiously declare that the meeting was not an illegal one, having been called at the request of the last quarterly meeting, in consequence of the superintendent having refused to put to the vote certain resolutions which had been previously handed to him for that purpose. Upon these frivolous charges, Mr. Sugden declared the brethren, Thompson, Parry, and Wallace, to be expelled from office and from the Methodist Society, without the conjunction of the majority of the leaders' meeting, only one individual appearing against them. We, therefore, in the fear of God, enter this our solemn protest against the proceedings of Mr. Sugden, in the trial of our said brethren, as being anti-methodistical, unconstitutional, and unjust; and declare that we consider the expulsion of our three brethren, Thompson, Parry, and Wallace, null and void, and that they are, notwithstanding thereof, members of the Methodist Society, and of the leaders' and local preachers' meetings.

E. DIGNUM, leader, local preacher, and trustee,	ROBERT BURGESS, leader,
JOHN TANKARD, leader,	THOS. FOWLS, leader and trustee,
JOHN GRIMDITCH, trustee,	THOS. LOCKETT, leader,
A. ANDERSON, trustee,	THOS. DARLINGTON, leader and local preacher,
W. SANDBACH, leader,	JOHN SUTTON, leader,
THOS. CRIMES, trustee,	J. ALLCOCK, leader and local preacher,
BENJAMIN CRIMES, trustee,	ROBERT HOWARTH, leader,
JOHN WOOD, trustee,	JOSEPH FOWLS, leader,
W. JACKSON, leader and local preacher,	JOHN PRICE, local preacher.

*Northwich, Feb. 24, 1835.*

J. S. B.

## MISSIONARY MEETING IN THE STOURBRIDGE CIRCUIT.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—If the following is not considered foreign from the object of your highly useful publication, you may, possibly, give it insertion:

A meeting, announced as a Missionary one, was held last month at Brierley-hill, near Stourbridge, which I attended, expecting to be both edified and interested, by details of the past achievements and future prospects of missionary labour; but, to my great surprise and mortification, nearly all the time was occupied in advocating the Theological Institution, and denouncing its opponents.

A clique of pugnacious preachers took the field, fought without adversaries, and triumphed without victory.

The report read by Mr. Fiddian, the secretary, introduced the Institution, and, evidently, sanctioned and supported it. Now I have reason to believe that nearly the whole society there are opposed to it; but this I know, certainly, that at the last quarter-day, at Stourbridge, (and representatives from Brierley-hill, joined a part of that meeting,) the said Institution, as well as the manner of its introduction, were *unanimously protested against*. From these facts, I infer the report was principally a statement of the views of its writer, and not the sentiments of a large majority of the subscribers.

Mr. Frankland, the preacher from Tipton, moved the adoption of the report, and he struck into a vindication of the College at once. Some might think this a preconcerted affair; I certainly could not assert it was not so. He could not have exerted himself more had he been fee'd for it; but a tottering cause requires more powerful advocacy than Mr. Frankland can command, to make it appear either fair or firm; he talked of young men getting a knowledge of business, and polished before they embarked. He must, indeed, know very little of life, or he would never think of making plain individuals gentlemen whilst they were at the Institution. It has been said, "A little learning is a dangerous thing:" in this case a little etiquette would be a very ridiculous acquisition. In reference to those who did not choose to pour their money into the coffers of a society whose general agents are irresponsible to the local ones, from what he said anatomy must have been one of his studies; for, inquired he, with a triumphant tone, if any one were afflicted with fever, or other disorder, would you cut off his head by way of curing him? I answer, No! but let strong meat and stimulating drink be abstained from until the disease is subdued, and let him have water gruel; and for this the Contingent Fund will be amply sufficient, while such heads as the speakers get cool. He said that those who differed from them had been represented as assuming the appearance of angels of light, but he thought there was something very black about them, and added, he *could* speak of their motives; which insinuation was calculated to leave an impression respecting them similar to that being cast on an individual when it is said, "he is no better than he should be;" nothing bad is said, but much ill is implied.

Mr. Edwards, from Dudley, followed, who said he had looked within, and without, and around, to see whether they had been fools all their lives; they were told that Methodism was not prosperous. He attempted to rebut this, by stating that vast acquisitions had been made to the society within the last year or two: if this is granted, still, considering the number of agents and other circumstances, it might be disputed whether it has maintained its ground. I would ask, Does Mr. Edwards wish Methodism to have that kind of prosperity which Popery and Mahomedanism have had? In my estimation, its numerical force alone is very subordinate evidence of it; purity of principle, and consistency of conduct in its adherents are its real strength: a hundred disciplined veterans would rout a thousand untaught men. He made some boasting statements of the funds not falling off, and, as well as the preceding speaker, gave the audience to understand that he could go into motives, but made a virtue of necessity, and declined. I had thought motives belonged to our own bosoms, and to God; but it appears I was in error. Had not Messrs. Frankland and Edwards better write a work on the subject? or suppose they are made masters in the art of judging of Methodist motives? But when mortal, erring man usurps the prerogative of Deity itself, the business is too serious for irony; a day is coming when justice will be done to those whose characters and motives are so unjustly and shamefully maligned.

Next came Mr. Fish, who made a great flourish, by asserting that the collections at several places had been more than usual, and said that those who differed from them had either bad hearts or deranged heads; he also, in a very contemptuous manner, designated the dissentients "*The small friends*:" but his rhetoric is not confined to derision; in order to make an impression at the close, and carry the passions of his auditors along with him instead of their understandings, he theatrically represented the solemnities of the final judgment: theatrically I say; for who could have believed, after hearing the commencement, that what he ended with arose from a feeling conviction of that awful day?

Mr. Duncan was the last speaker; and notwithstanding all the boasting during the evening, there were evident symptoms of misgiving; he said, while listening to those who went before, he could not help laughing at their doubts and fears; perhaps he has imbibed the opinion of Lord Bolingbroke, and makes ridicule the test of truth. He informed his audience, if they did not

know before, that the English language was spoken in the West Indies, and in order to the Missionaries speaking in terms sufficiently simple to the negroes, they must have a classical education: so the Institution has two objects at least—to qualify the students to communicate with Government officers, and to address the poor illiterate blacks.

Two reflections in particular force themselves on the attention, in reference to the proceedings of this meeting,—the paucity of argument, if such it may be called, and the entire absence of every thing like Christian feeling. Putting the matter in the worst possible position, and allowing, for argument, these objectors to Conference are bad men, acting from factious motives; from ministers of Jesus Christ, it might be expected pity would be shown towards them, and prayers ascend that their wandering feet might be turned into the way of truth; but, no, they have no compassion for such sinners: their dear discipline, or rather, darling despotism, must be maintained, even at the destruction of such demagogues.

I, however, happen to be acquainted with many of those so vilified at Liverpool, especially from a residence of eleven years there; I know the consistency of their private walk,—of their disinterested and persevering exertions in promoting religion; by preaching, class-leading, (though the affluent are called the leading-men now,) conducting prayer-meetings, and especially by labouring in Sunday schools. I congratulate them on suffering for righteousness' sake, and in having made those defences recorded in your paper, which cannot be answered or shaken either by the sophistry or malice of their accusers.

Yours, &c.

R. T.

*Junction-house, near Stourbridge, Feb. 21, 1835.*

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#### THE REV. JOHN PAWSON'S DYING ADVICE TO THE CONFERENCE.

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The name of John Pawson will long be remembered in the annals of Methodism. This "blessed man of God," as the Rev. Geo. Marsden denominates him, was an able, zealous, and acceptable preacher of the gospel for more than forty-three years, and on all occasions proved himself the firm and uncompromising defender of the people's privileges. About the year 1795 he wrote a most animated address to the societies on the subjects which at that time agitated the Connexion, which we shall take an early opportunity of laying before our readers. What were his fears and forebodings respecting the future conduct of his brethren in the ministry, and of the rocks on which the Connexion would ultimately be shattered, may be gathered from the following letter to the Conference, extracted from the Methodist Magazine for 1806. John Pawson formed a connecting link between the primitive race of Methodist preachers and those who have survived to our own times, having entered the ministry in the year 1762, and died in 1806. He had "borne the burden and heat of the day" at a period when the name of Methodist was, in the eye of the world, a reproach and shame to those who took it upon them; when to sustain the character of a Methodist preacher required a degree of moral courage, and a sacrifice of personal ease and indulgence, which only an intense desire for the salvation of souls, and an entire abandonment of self in his devotion to the cause of his Master, could have produced. This period of trial he had survived. He lived to see Methodism recognised by the world as something tolerably respectable, and he likewise perceived, or thought he perceived, the incipient germ of those noxious weeds which have latterly been thriving apace, and spreading their baneful influence throughout our body. The opinions of such a man, when near the closing scene of life, at a time when passion and prejudice must have lost their influence, come with peculiar weight, particularly at the



present important crisis, when a recurrence to the original principles of Methodism is so desirable.

Mr. Pawson having, in the year 1800, under an apprehension that his time would not be long on earth, drawn up a letter of advice to his brethren, to be communicated to them after his death, on the 26th of February, 1806, with great solemnity he put it into the hands of a friend, with an earnest request that it might be read to them at the ensuing Conference, as containing his dying testimony and advice. On the 18th of March he died. From this important and interesting document we extract the following passages:—

“May I be permitted, as a dying man, to give you a little advice, which I hope, when I am no more, you will seriously think of;—take care that you all constantly maintain the primitive Methodist spirit. You are in great danger of conforming to the world in your dress, in your manners, and in your spirit and temper of mind. O! watch and pray against this deadly evil; and let not your wives and children fall into this snare of the devil.

“Abide by every branch of our discipline. You have known the blessing which has attended it; but *never try to make the door of the church narrower than God hath made the door of heaven*. Never, no never while you live, give the least countenance to any thing like a persecuting spirit.

“Take all possible care to maintain a lively, spiritual, heart-searching ministry. To this end I entreat you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, never, no, never try to make ministers, by substituting *learning* or any thing else in the room of the *call of God*, and those spiritual gifts and graces which he always did and always will bestow upon those whom he sends to labour in his vineyard. The great Head of the church will always take care to provide a sufficient number of faithful men to publish the glad tidings of salvation in his name. It is your duty to pray that the Lord of the harvest may send forth labourers; but never try to *make* them: he will do that himself. Religion has been utterly ruined, in almost every particular body of Christians, by this deadly evil the establishing a *learned*, instead of a *lively, spiritual* ministry.”\*

“If ever the life and power of godliness begin to decay among the Methodists, look well to yourselves, for the first cause will be with the preachers.”

Was the good old man, like Jacob of old? Was there dimly shadowed forth before the eye of his mind what should befall his brethren in the latter days? The reply we leave to our readers.

\* The Italics in this paragraph are not ours; they are printed precisely as we find them in the “Magazine.”

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#### MR. ROBERT EMMETT, OF YARM.

The following letter has been addressed to the Liverpool Committee of the Association by the Rev. Robert Emmett, the preacher who has so nobly come forward to declare his liberal sentiments at the present important crisis. We beg to recommend the careful perusal of it to our readers:—

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE LIVERPOOL WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The favourable opinion of your committee respecting my letter which appeared in the *Christian Advocate* of the 18th ultimo, was very gratifying to my feelings, and the more so as it was altogether unexpected and

unlooked for. I am satisfied you have estimated it far beyond its intrinsic value ; but I suppose you have acted on the principle of accepting the will for the deed ; if so, Brethren, then you have only done me justice in the very handsome manner in which you have expressed your opinion of the same.

I trust that not only every week, but every day, will bring fresh accessions to your numbers. I perfectly agree with you in opinion, that "ignorance on the part of the people, is the great and fertile means whereby priestly domination is perpetuated." It, therefore, becomes a duty to remove that ignorance by spreading information as extensively as possible ; at the same time, Christian forbearance will teach you to be as tender as possible to the individuals by whom such melancholy instances of misrule have been perpetrated, remembering that you, in common with others, have, by long continued *unscriptural submission*, encouraged their proceedings.

It has been asserted by some of the best English lawyers, that even a British Parliament with the King at their head, have no lawful power to make any laws, contrary to the great Charter of the Kingdom : for in such a case, the constitution would be dissolved, and a revolution would ensue. Whatever may be in this, it is manifest in the New Testament that all decrees which are contrary to the Gospel Charter of Christian liberty, destroy the constitution of the church. I contend that the Conference decree of 1827 has destroyed the charter of 1797, and is opposed to the Gospel charter ; therefore there exists an urgent necessity for extraordinary measures to counteract the injury, and it is not an act of rebellion in your Association to come forward on the present emergency, as you have done, but it is an act of the highest virtue.

I have heard it said in reference to political opinions, and the remark equally applies to those by which our Connexion is now agitated, "that the man who cannot form an opinion is a fool ; that the man who will not form an opinion is a villain ; but a man who dares not form an opinion is a coward and a slave." Whatever others may do, some of whom I have in my view, I can, will, and dare form, yea, and give expression to my opinion. Indeed, I am more deeply convinced every succeeding day, that this is the time for every man to *speak out*, and to *act out*, his principles ; I will therefore state frankly and fully what is in my heart respecting Methodism, as it has been *recently* in too many instances administered (down to the Camelford and Warminster expulsions, as reported in the *Christian Advocate* of the 9th instant,) that, of all other isms, it presents (not to use stronger terms) the *most repulsive* aspect. But, I contend that such expulsions are not in accordance with genuine Wesleyan Methodism ; I therefore, as a Christian, as a member of Conference, and as a Wesleyan Methodist, rightly understood, bear my testimony against such melancholy instances of misrule, and I further pledge myself to *stand or fall with those who are resolved to stand or fall in the defence of the truth*.

Brethren, *it is the truth* for which you are contending, and the preachers *know* it full well ; they *know* they have exercised an unlawful, because an unscriptural authority over you ; they *know* they have no authority to assume the prerogative of exclusive legislators in the church. I *speak advisedly* : this, I fearlessly assert, is the root of bitterness which has troubled so many of us ; yea, the upas tree which has borne such deadly fruit as to slay many of our members. Uproot this unhallowed plant, for it is not of our Father's right-hand planting : leave not a *single fibre* of it in the system, for where it flourishes nothing good can long survive.

It is now become a very serious question as to what can be done, or ought to be done, to extricate you and the Conference out of the difficulties in which both parties are involved. I think there is a very easy and honourable plan to be adopted by both parties, without any sacrifice or compromise of principle on either side. I therefore would suggest to the preachers throughout the Connexion, that at the ensuing of June quarterly meetings they allow the subject to be discussed in a friendly and Christian manner, allowing all the dissentients to be present in their official capacity ; and if, after such discussion, it shall appear that a *decided* majority of our official members are in favour of things remaining as they are, I think it will then become the duty of the minority to *submit quietly* to such decision, or *at once retire* : a separation conducted on such principles would, in my opinion, tend to the furtherance of our common Christianity. We could thus *agree to differ*, and wish each other God speed : there would be no feeling of insulting triumph on the part of those who stay, nor of disgraceful defeat on the part of those who go. Though I frankly confess that, in the present temper of the Conference party, I see little hope of such a proposition being accepted ; yet,

notwithstanding, I submit to your Association whether it would not be advisable to make it, and leave the responsibility of rejecting it with them.

Finally, brethren, be up and doing. What your hands find to do, do it with all your might! Whilst the conflict is going on there is danger of some souls missing their way; it therefore behoves all concerned to bring the struggle to a speedy conclusion. *Now, perhaps, now or never* is the time to save our Connexion. You have *many* friends in this quarter who would declare themselves, if they *could do so without risk*; and I believe you have *some friends* who are ready to declare themselves at all possible risks, and who are ready "to come up to the help of the Lord," (for I believe the battle is His,) "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." I remain, dear brethren, yours, in the best of bonds.

ROBERT EMMETT.

The editor of the *Christian Advocate*, in which paper the above letter originally appeared, in commenting upon it, makes the following remarks:

"Mr. Emmett's amiable suggestion is one that it would certainly be wise for his brethren in the ministry to listen to; for, if they have the majority which they affirm they have, and if they really wish to get rid of all whom they call "disaffected," no means could more easily and completely accomplish their wishes. But we suspect the sincerity of their declarations, and, with Mr. Emmett, we expect nothing in the shape of concession, however slight, from men of their temper: and, for our own parts, we doubt the success of the experiment suggested, were it even fairly tried. If there is any thing in the principles of minorities quietly yielding and quietly retiring, it should operate in individual cases, as well as in collecting the aggregate of opinion. It is to be remembered that the quarterly meeting is not a general assembly of the Connexion; but a local meeting, assembled in hundreds of places, in which contrary decisions may, and, no doubt, will, be come to. In some places the decision will be favourable to the preachers; in others, and we trust the majority, against them. But suppose not; suppose the majority of quarterly meetings to decide for leaving the power and claims of Conference untouched;—what then? Is that to be final? is it to bind the large *majorities* in circuits in each of which a contrary decision was adopted? Are the *majorities of circuits* to retire? But, perhaps Mr. Emmett means his principle to apply in particular cases: if so, *the Connexion is broken up*, and we cannot stop short of *Independency*. Perhaps, however, this is the destined goal of the Connexion.

## PROCEEDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

If the Reverend Gentleman alluded to in the subjoined letter is not entirely devoid of shame, his countenance must surely be suffused with crimson when he reads the following exposure of a proceeding which we do hope, for the credit of Methodist preachers, is, indeed, a "case without a parallel." We have good reason to know that many persons, hitherto thorough partisans of the Conference, have expressed themselves as being completely astounded at this exhibition of despotism, and seriously talk of summoning Mr. Jackson *before a special district meeting*. We think, however, there have been quite enough of these farces enacted to satisfy any reasonable person of the kind of justice to be expected from them. For our own parts we are not in the least surprised at the circumstance. The cloven foot has peeped out a little too soon,—that is all. Any person of ordinary discernment might have foreseen to what lengths the principles of church government, as laid down by the preachers, would eventually reach. Still there are few who would have expected that the adage of "*No penny, no Paternoster*," could have been revived in the 19th century, and, least of all, by Methodist preachers.

TO THE SECRETARY AND MEMBERS OF THE LIVERPOOL WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION.

DEAR BRETHREN,—It becomes my painful task to acquaint you of my dismissal from the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, or what I consider tantamount to it, my not being allowed a ticket,—not for any immoral conduct—not even for being a member of the Association, or for attending any of its meetings, for as

yet I am not a member, neither have I been present at a single meeting, but simply because I objected to contribute to the yearly collection. I was not aware that there was any law in existence to compel a member to contribute to that collection; but, if there is, then have I paid for my learning. My case is this:—

On Wednesday, the 11th instant, our class was met for tickets, in the vestry of Brunswick Chapel, by the Rev. Samuel Jackson. After asking me a few questions respecting my experience, without presenting me with a ticket, (which is the usual method,) he very drily said, "Are you a member of the Association?" "No," was my reply. "Then, what do you intend to subscribe to the yearly collection?" "*Nothing*," was the answer. "Then," said he, still holding the ticket in his hand, "you cannot be retained as a member of this Society." "Do you not intend to grant me a ticket?" "I cannot," he replied, "except you contribute to our collections." My answer was, "I have contributed to them for thirty-three years, and have done the best in my power to promote and carry on the work of God, but, unless my expelled brethren are restored to the bosom of the church, I have made up my mind to withhold my contributions." My ticket was then put away. I took up my money, and, after making a few remarks on the impropriety of the present unaccountable conduct of the preachers, I sat down.

I cannot wonder at my treatment, though I may be allowed to grieve, seeing that so many of my dear brethren (with whom I cannot for a moment compare myself, either for piety or talent,) have been rudely put away before me; but one thing certainly surprises me, and that is, that Mr. Jackson goes about this work with a degree of *indifference*, *apathy*, and *unconcern*, truly admirable. He is, indeed, a faithful and zealous servant to those that employ him. You see, then, brethren, that I am, in a manner, constrained to become a member of the Association, and that by the Rev. Gentleman himself. If, then, you are willing to receive me, please to insert my name in your list of worthies: it is a good cause—the cause of liberty—and I have no doubt of its success.

A few of the class wishing to follow me, I have agreed to receive them into my house for the present, and to meet them on the Wednesday evenings; yet, though I was an accredited leader for seven or eight years, I have no desire to get into that office; you will, therefore, do well to direct me what is to be done with these few wandering sheep, that they may not be scattered or driven away.

I have generally led the class, owing to Mr. Davies being a young leader, and very diffident of his own abilities.

Wishing you all the prosperity you can desire, I remain, your affectionate brother,

JOHN WHITTINGHAM.

*Bittern-street, Great Orford-street, 17th March, 1835.*

#### PROTEST OF THE PRAYER LEADERS IN THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT.

The following protest was last week sent to the Rev. G. Marsden, signed by twenty-five prayer conductors in the Liverpool South Circuit. It is still in course of signature:

TO THE REV. GEO. MARSDEN.

DEAR SIR,—At this momentous crisis, we, prayer leaders of the Mount-pleasant district, think it our imperative duty to state our decided judgment in reference to the unscriptural suspension of our beloved brethren, who, with us, have entered the field of conflict under the Captain of our salvation. These brethren, dear Sir, are standard bearers in Emanuel's army; it is true, reform is engraven on their colours, but, Sir, this reform is founded on the principles of the New Testament, which can be proved to a demonstration. The suspension of our beloved brother Sanderson, the secretary, and our esteemed brethren, Fegan, Johnston, and Byrne, we shall never recognise; it is an act of despotic power against which we most solemnly protest; we seriously deprecate any cause that might weaken our united strength in going up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It is our glorious object to roll the tide of war into the heart of the enemy's territory, shouting—"Victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb." We beseech you to consider your responsibility, as you must give an account to the Judge of all the earth. The words of the inspired prophet may apply to you. Jeremiah, 23 chap. v. 1—2, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord!" and those impressive words of our incarnate Redeemer, St. Luke, 17 chap. v. 1—2, "Then said he unto his disciples, it is impossible but that offences



will come, but woe unto him through whom they come!" Offences originate in a cause; this cause we trace up to the exercise of an unscriptural power which empties the vial of its wrath on all those who will not bow down to your infallible tribunal. This is antichristian. We earnestly pray you to sympathize with us, who bear the reproach of Christ, and that by counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering, we may be found in Him, and in the end may all be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

John Bullen,  
John Newell,  
John Black,  
John Mitchell,  
Thomas Maguire,  
Richard Maddocks,  
L. Armstrong,  
Robert Mulloy,  
David Longbottom,

John Bowman,  
William Nicholson,  
John Dugdall,  
Edward Greenall,  
Joseph Blinkhorn,  
George Rinick,  
George M'Mullin,  
George Scarf,

Thomas Rodgers,  
David Lothian,  
John Hall,  
John Bradburn,  
John Bamber,  
William Hughes,  
Charles Hall,  
Isaac Youd.

Liverpool, March 19, 1835.

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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We feel obliged to the editor of the *Christian Advocate* for his favourable notice of our little publication. We must, however, beg to set him right in one point. Much of the information from various parts of the Connexion sent to the *Advocate* for insertion is likewise sent directly to us; so that it may sometimes appear that we are extracting without acknowledgment from his columns, when in reality we are deriving our information from the same source as himself.

In No. 9, of the *Lantern*, p. 127, we inserted in our "Sayings and Doings" an account of some singular proceedings which took place at the meeting for tickets of Mr. Gibson's class. The *Illuminator* of last Wednesday, in his notices to correspondents, in his usual polite phraseology, which we shall not imitate, charges us with falsehood, with asserting that words had been "uttered by a man of the name of Bew, which never, on that occasion, fell from his lips." We were not present ourselves on that occasion, but had our information from one who was; we have also taken the trouble to make inquiries from Mr. Bew himself, and are informed that our statement is substantially correct, though it may be that the precise words are not given. When Mr. Gibson's "telling" letter makes its promised appearance, we shall be prepared to say more. We are likewise informed by an eye witness, that our account of what took place at the meeting of Mr. Thomas's class, the same evening, is considerably under-stated. The scene we are told beggared all description. This charge of mis-statement comes with a singular grace from an editor who could deliberately sit down and falsify quotations from our publication, as he has done in page 57 of the *Illuminator*!

We have received a letter from our Nantwich correspondent who signs "*Pickle*," confirming the truth of our statement of the conversation which took place at the temperance meeting, with this difference, that it took place in the committee, not in the public meeting. We think, however, that quite enough has been said *pro* and *con*. on the subject.

In our next we expect to give an account of the expulsions which have taken place during the last fortnight in the Liverpool South Circuit. In the meantime, however, we may just as well give the names of those leaders who have fallen victims to clerical misrule, namely,—John Taylor, Robert Harley, Charles Byrne, William Sanderson, Thomas Fegan, William Johnston, jun., James Martin, Thomas Storey, Robert Thorpe, John Lindsay, William Bennion, and Robert Day.

We have also to acknowledge the following communications:—*A Methodist Reformer*, Hull, also an account of the late expulsions which have taken place there. J. G. and T. P. Rosevear, Esq. Camelford.

The touching letters of Mr. Joseph Carne, of Truro, have been received, and either the whole or extracts from them shall speedily appear.

*No. 12 will be published on Wednesday, the 8th of April.*

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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No. 12.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 1835.

Price 2d.

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## ABSURDITIES OF LAWGIVERS WITHOUT THE GENIUS OF LAWYERS.

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*Warren v. Burton.*—The Lord Chancellor has affirmed the decision of the Vice-Chancellor. In delivering judgment, his Lordship said:—

"In this case, I entirely agree with the observations made by his Honour, the Vice-Chancellor, in the commencement of his judgment, which has been handed up to me, that this cannot justly be considered as a case of trifling importance. It is a case of some importance, even in a pecuniary point of view, to Dr. Warren,—not with reference to his actual position, but as it may affect his future position and interest as connected with this Society. But, independently of that, every question that comes into a court of justice affecting the feelings of great masses of people, particularly where they are associated together for objects of religion, can never be considered as of trifling importance."

Superintendents who have recklessly expelled thousands of their unoffending brethren, with a coldness, indifference, and apathy altogether unaccountable, as if the feelings and spiritual welfare of great masses of people were of trifling importance, would do well to ponder this remark of the Learned Judge:—

"I trust I may be permitted to express my regret that, in a Society so constituted, for such objects, with such motives, and with such feelings, dissensions of this description should have been introduced; and *I must suggest whether it would not be advisable to make some endeavour, for the interests of this Society, by some attempt towards accommodation, to put an end to those dissensions which have given rise to the present proceedings.*"

This is precisely the object of the Association, and, in all their proceedings, they have kept it steadily in view. It being admitted on all sides that the laws are loosely drawn up, it follows, of course, that they ought to be revised.

"I do not mean to say that there is not some difficulty in this case, (says his Lordship,) but, as I said during the argument, and as I felt throughout, there are difficulties both ways. The construction of the law is doubtful. It is said that if a law is clear, usage at variance with that law cannot alter the law. But I don't consider, taking the law by itself, that it is perfectly clear. Standing by itself it is not perfectly clear."

Such is the uncertain state of the law as regards the preachers; but the laws by which the people ought to be governed are still more indefinite and contradictory. It is perfectly clear, from the general bearing of his Lordship's remarks, that superintendents have not the power to expel leaders and private members on their own sole authority; but, as they continue to exercise such arbitrary power, it must, in candour, be admitted, that the sooner the laws are revised the better. With this view delegates are about to assemble in Manchester, and if their reasonable propositions be fairly met by Conference, agreeably to the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor, we see no insuperable difficulties in the way to a general accommodation. Counsel are pretty

well acquainted with the merits of the case; and it would not be a difficult task for Sir William Horne and Mr. Rolfe on the part of the Conference, and Sir Charles Wetherell and Mr. Knight on behalf of the people, to frame, in a legal, binding, and lasting form, such laws, rules, and regulations as may be mutually agreed upon, taking care, also, *to have them properly entered in the Journals of Conference, and signed by the President and Secretary.\**

It would seem, however, that the venerable fathers are not yet disposed to follow the Chancellor's advice, for the very novel doctrine is promulgated in pamphlets under their patronage, as well as from the pulpit, that the grievances of a minority of the people require no redress so long as the majority remain passive; an objection which, we venture to predict for their consolation, will be removed before the meeting of Conference.—But the people are modestly told, by the very men whom Mr. Wesley himself styled *lay* preachers, not to keep their money in their pockets, nor even to *think* without *permission*!

On the subject of finance our quondam friends evince an extraordinary soreness. What right have the preachers to expect donations from those whom they have insulted by mock trials and illegal expulsions? If they really want an augmentation of funds for the purposes so oft and so piteously mentioned, and not for the publication of scurrilous pamphlets in order to beguile the people out of their rights, is the unjust expulsion of members the most likely way to obtain it? To ask them for money, under existing circumstances, is the height of impudence. If the accounts published in the *Wesleyan Magazine* be founded in truth, there can be no need of money; if not, the flourish of *influentials* and *respectables* on collection-days is worse than empty boasting, and we must draw a line of distinction between apparent and visible—and real and substantial acts of munificence.

“The expression, ‘*we think*,’ has been strangely interpreted to imply, (quothe the *Illuminator*,) that though the CONFERENCE thus expresses an *opinion* on the subject of such meetings, *leave* is given to the PEOPLE to *think* just the contrary, if they please, and to act accordingly!!” Bright specimens these of the aptitude for *improvement* in the science of legislation of that erudite body to whom the Vice-Chancellor paid such well-merited compliments on their skill in the art of manufacturing “BLUNDERS,” and on their accurate knowledge of the “received construction and application of the English language!” With discreet zeal, the Rev. J. Edmondson very properly ascribes all this merit exclusively to the preachers. Surely, therefore, such wise lawgivers ought to be placed above responsibility! No doubt they are infallible, and “wisdom shall die with them.”

The LORD CHANCELLOR.—They are gentlemen of education, I suppose?

Mr. ROLFE.—Yes, oh yes, my Lord.

The LORD CHANCELLOR.—Because, at first view, one would have taken just the reverse notion of it, and considered that the local preachers, and not the travelling preachers, were the respectable and educated preachers.

Speaking of district meetings, his Lordship gives the Conference credit for a greater degree of disinterestedness than that hopeful body ever deserved:—

“Is it possible to suppose, that if in 1796 or 1797, immediately after the passing of the Articles of Pacification, the district committee had removed or suspended a preacher; when they made their report to the Conference, would

\* See page 180.

they not have immediately said, (if that was not the meaning of the law,) 'You have acted illegally; you have acted, it may be, with good intentions, but you have acted contrary to our law for promoting the harmony of the Society, as promulgated by us in 1795?' But no such thing takes place. The report of the district committee is entered by the Conference, without comment, and so it goes on from the year 1795 down to the present time."

The Chancellor, it would appear, was not aware that, even prior to the period spoken of, the Conference began to maintain a struggle for arbitrary power, and, consequently, to the present day they have approved of every encroachment on the rights of the people perpetrated by district meetings, which were, in fact, (as in the Leeds case,) composed of the influential members of Conference, and, therefore, not very likely to censure themselves afterwards, in their Conferential character. It is a remarkable feature in the present controversy, that the writers in the pay of Conference pertinaciously adhere to that sort of tortuous crooked policy which is disgraceful even in an ordinary election wrangle. The *Watchman*, which they pretend was established "by a number of *lay* gentlemen," has been detected in making numerous addenda and alterations in the report of the trial, in order to suit their party purposes, (a most unwarrantable liberty with the judgment of the Court,) and the editor, though publicly charged with the fact, has not dared to attempt a vindication of his conduct. No matter what the subject in dispute, the want of candour and of Christian charity rests with the preachers and their partisans. His Lordship, after various remarks on the legal points touching this case, thus concluded:—

"I am, therefore, of opinion, not only that the district committee had power to suspend, but that this district committee acted *legally*. More, I am not called upon to say. Whether they acted *wisely, temperately, discreetly, or cruelly and harshly*, these are matters which do not come before me, and on which I desire to express no opinion. From what I have heard—indeed, *I may say, from what I know*—of the character of Dr. Warren, of his learning, of his piety, of his talents, of his general good conduct, which have been stated on the one side, and not even attempted to be contradicted on the other; taking all these things, I say, into consideration, *I must express my regret that he should be the sufferer—I WILL NOT SAY THE VICTIM*—the sufferer arising out of a contest which originated, as it appears, in the establishment of a particular body, which this Society, or a part of this Society, thought it right to introduce. I again express my regret that *he should have been the sufferer—I WILL NOT SAY THE VICTIM*—but the *sufferer* in these proceedings. The judgment, therefore, of the Vice-Chancellor must be affirmed, and is accordingly affirmed."

By this decision both preachers and trustees are at the mercy of the dominant party in Conference; the former may be suspended upon *ANY frivolous* charge without redress, and can only have redress when accused of immorality, heterodoxy, violation of rules, or want of ability. Though Dr. Warren's case is not immediately connected with the principal objects of the Association, yet the rights of trustees, stewards, and leaders, as representatives of the people, and especially the pecuniary interests of trustees, are deeply involved. Therefore let them at once espouse the cause of the people, and they will soon be placed in a state of safety. They who implicitly bow to Conferential authority, and blindly adhere to the dominant party through thick and thin, in all their whims and caprices, will hereafter meet with the same ungrateful treatment which their ill-used and illegally-expelled brethren have experienced, and, *what is infinitely worse*, they will richly deserve it. If, after what has recently transpired, they tamely permit lawless aggressions to be made on their rights and privileges



without resistance, the time will speedily arrive when remonstrance will be of no avail, and they will be effectually silenced. Let the preachers once become *dictators*, and the people, as a matter of necessity, will be sunk to the abject condition of their *slaves*. Place, for instance, the expulsion of leaders at the discretion of the preachers, and you may bid adieu, an eternal adieu, to the rights and liberties of the people!

In commenting on the decision, the *Christian Advocate* says,—

“Were we in the situation of the defendants, or, rather, of the members of the Manchester Special District Meeting, we would willingly have submitted to a contrary decision, rather than have had a decision in our favour, clogged, as was the Chancellor’s, by the severest censures that could be couched in the language of implication. They had, indeed, their pound of flesh; but it was not awarded them without very significant comments on the barbarity of exacting it. His Lordship admitted that they had authority to do what they had done; but he refused to pronounce an opinion as to the manner in which they had exercised their authority, “whether *wisely, discreetly, temperately, or CRUELLY and HARSHLY.*” This form of innuendo, besides being the Chancellor’s favourite mode of conveying censure or sarcasm, is too well understood to need any explanation. Twice, also, his Lordship expressed his deep regret that Dr. Warren, one only (as if he had said) of thirty-one all equally guilty, if guilty at all, should be the *sufferer*—HE WOULD NOT SAY THE VICTIM—in consequence of opposing the Theological Institution.”

#### EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERY.

We beg to call the attention of our readers to the following most extraordinary discovery. A day or two before the Lord Chancellor delivered judgment on the cause on which we have just commented, Dr. Warren (by the advice of counsel) called upon Mr. Mason, to inspect the Journals of Conference, and was peremptorily refused. Sir Charles Wetherell desired him to go again and demand, as a member of Conference, an inspection of the Journals, with an intimation to Mr. Mason that a second refusal would be immediately followed by an application to the Lord Chancellor. The Doctor was again repulsed, but in less than an hour received a note of permission. Accompanied by Sir Charles Wetherell and Mr. Parker, Dr. Warren returned to the office, where he found Mr. Mason, Mr. Percival Bunting, and Mr. Brown in attendance, and in their presence perused the Journals. He found it enacted, in the preamble of the Deed of Declaration, commonly called Mr. Wesley’s Poll-deed, “that no law, rule, or regulation, should be BINDING on any preacher, officer, or other member, of the Connexion, *unless inserted in the Journals, and signed by the President and Secretary*, for the time being. On referring to the year 1795 he found, to his utter astonishment, not a syllable of the Articles of Pacification recorded; but, on the contrary, a protest entered against them, by the late Rev. Thomas Taylor. He then referred to 1797, for the Concessions made at Leeds, and found nothing but the preamble,—not a word of the Regulations relative to the rights of the people!

This is a sad picture to be held up to a Christian community, and we pity the party who must subscribe their names to the truth of it. But *why* were not these articles regularly entered in the Journals? *Why* all this want of candour and fair dealing? Have the ruling faction yet to learn that “*Honesty* is the best policy?” They know full well that on the faith of these articles of Pacification, (*Mystification?*)

as stated by Sir Charles Wetherell, there are upwards of 500 deeds on which money has been advanced, subscriptions raised, property created, pew-rents and other funds collected. Ought they not, then, to have avoided even the *appearance* of unfair dealing towards the trustees, whose reflections on this part of "Methodism as it is," whatever some of them may pretend to the contrary, cannot be of the most cheering description?

It has been ably and successfully contended by the Rev. T. Allin, of Sheffield, whose cogent and conclusive arguments the Conference party have never been able to shake, that the Articles of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797, were a mere juggle, and if any thing were wanting to confirm the fact, Dr. Warren's discovery is sufficient. The dominant party have throughout acted a hollow, deceitful, treacherous part towards the people, and their conduct demonstrates, beyond contradiction, the absolute necessity of insisting upon sufficient guarantees for their future good faith, and strict observance of the laws by Conference. And are we to be told, after all this, by the hirelings of the party, that the people shall not presume even to *think* without *THEIR permission*? Audacious cant! Was any thing so monstrous ever heard of in this land of liberty during centuries past? Dare the writer show his face in public and avow the sentiment? Such ridiculous stupid and contemptible notions positively destroy the character of the preachers in the estimation of all sensible men of every religious persuasion, and render them the laughing-stock of the whole kingdom. Let not the priesthood rejoice before they achieve the victory. This is not exactly the time for indulgence in unhallowed merriment, but rather the season for the delivery of a course of lectures on trick and "false pretences," subjects so discreetly introduced and temperately discussed in another place, and on which the foregoing will naturally present to the mind of the lecturer some apt illustrations!

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### LAY DELEGATION.

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The members of the Methodist Conference, at the present day, appear to have much the same dread of the principle of lay representation as a certain nameless personage is said to have of holy water. That this was not always the case with Methodist preachers will appear from the following Declaration, promulgated by members of the Conference quite as respectable in their day as the dominant faction of the present time:—

"We see no reason to object to the admission of delegates from our societies into our district meetings,—*nor of delegates from our circuits into the Conference*,—to assist and advise with us in all matters which properly concern them as representatives of the people; as the friends of one common cause, as children of one heavenly Father, we entreat you to pray for us."

(Signed,)

THOMAS HANBY,  
THOMAS DIXON,  
JOHN PENMAN,  
JOHN ATKINS,  
SIMON DAY,

GEO. SERGEANT,  
THOMAS LANGLEY,  
JOHN NELSON,  
JOHN BEAUMONT,

THOMAS GREAVES,  
JOHN PARKIN,  
GEORGE DERMOT.  
GEORGE MORLEY,

One, at least, of the above preachers is now living. We should like to know whether he still adheres to the principle here laid down. Perhaps our contemporary of the *Calumniator*, who expresses such pious horror of "tergiversation," can inform us.

## MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION IN CARLISLE.

[Abridged from the *Carlisle Journal*.]

A very numerous meeting of the Methodist body in this city and the surrounding neighbourhood was held in the Methodist chapel, in Fisher-street, on the evening of Wednesday, March 25, for the purpose of hearing the statements of a deputation from the recently formed Manchester and Liverpool Reform Association, who had been invited expressly for the occasion, to give information as to the objects and the progress of the above Association, and to assist in organizing a Branch Society in Carlisle. A minister from London, of the name of Haswell, and another gentleman, said to be a barrister, also from London, were in Carlisle during the whole of Wednesday and the preceding day, and it was generally rumoured that they had been sent down by the Conference party to endeavour to prevent the meeting being held. Considerable exertions were made to accomplish this, but without effect. The trustees of the chapel received a letter from Mr. Dunn, in the course of Wednesday, requesting them not to allow the use of the chapel for the meeting, and warning them, in the event of their refusing to comply with that request, they would have to take the consequences upon themselves. In consequence of this threat, the trustees thought it prudent to take legal advice upon the question, and by that advice they determined to adhere to their previous intention of holding the meeting in the chapel. The chair was taken about seven o'clock, by R. Lowthian, Esq., of Carleton-house, who opened the meeting with an appropriate address.

Mr. T. J. Cox then addressed the meeting, and was received and heard throughout with great applause. He was highly gratified at seeing so numerous and respectable a meeting before him, assembled, not to subvert and pull down the cause of Methodism, as had been represented by their opponents, but for the single and express purpose of upholding it, of preserving it pure and entire, and of sending it down to their descendants undefiled by the corruptions which had gradually crept into its economy, and to preserve it such as they had received it from the hands of Wesley, its illustrious founder. To Methodism they were not opposed; its interests they were determined to uphold. In it they had received their first religious impressions; their affections and their hopes were centred in it; and they would cling to it while a single plank of the vessel stuck together. (Great cheering.)

One of the secretaries of, being also one of the deputation from, the Liverpool Association, was then called on by the chairman. After some preliminary observations, he said,—A state of agitation, when one set of principles were struggling against another, and the bond of union between friends and neighbours had been severed to pieces, was not a state in which the principles of the gospel could make much progress. But the enjoyment of peace, invaluable as it was, might be purchased at too dear a price. It might be based on a wrong foundation, and then, instead of being to be desired, it ought to be shunned as dangerous and deceitful. It then became a false and unrighteous peace, which it was the duty of every man to disturb. Such a peace had existed too long among them; but they were now shaking it off; the Conference would no longer rock them in its repose; they would no longer submit to be kept quiet under the strong bonds of ecclesiastical tyranny. (Much cheering.) The speaker then went on at great length to reply to the objections and cavils which were urged by the Conference party against the measures which he and those with whom he acted had adopted, against the motives and principles that had induced them to stand forward in defence of the rights of Methodists, and then proceeded to state the different encroachments by which, one by one, the Conference had robbed the people of their power and authority, until they had brought them to a state where they were determined to submit no longer to the yoke of despotism.

Mr. DAWSON made a few observations, and was followed by Mr. GREENHALGH, from Manchester, who related several circumstances which had transpired at that and other places, and which showed, in a very strong manner, the annoyance and high-priest like domination held over the Methodist body by the ministers. The Association, however, he said, was in a very flourishing condition. They had already no fewer than eight chapels in Manchester alone, and the number of leaders and members who were attached to those, and who regularly every week paid up the subscriptions for their classes and the different other necessary payments, was not less than 3000, while the actual members of the Association numbered some way about 80,000. The prospect before them was most cheering, and one good thing that was almost sure to happen, should the present dispute by the obstinacy of the Conference continue for any length of time, or if it should end by a redress of all those grievances which they now so justly complained of, would be that many of the little splits and parties which had every now and then separated themselves from the great body of the Connexion, on account of the wrongs they had suffered, and the abuses in the present system which they saw no likelihood of reforming, would come over again, and once more form one fold under one shepherd.

Mr. BARNES, from Liverpool, spoke next.—He said he had formerly been a great preacher's man; he could not bear to have them run down; but the events of the last six months had opened his eyes, and he now viewed things in a very different light. He was amongst those who had been *turned out* by the ministers for non-compliance with their imperious demands; he would not say he had been *expelled*, for between these two terms there appeared to be, according to some of the preachers, a very considerable difference. (Laughter.) When he was put out, he had written to several of the preachers with whom he had formerly been acquainted, to ask their advice as to what they considered best to be done under the circumstances in which he was placed. What advice, what consolation had he received from these humble men, did they suppose? He would read them a letter received from one of them, and then they might judge for themselves whether the writer ought to be considered as one of those poor lowly preachers of the doctrines of Methodism and the Gospel, or as a despotic overruling Catholic priest. The speaker then read a letter, in which the writer severely censured the conduct of the former, told him that the pastor had only to rule, and that it was one of the marks of the apostacy of the times that men should think of choosing their own teachers in religious concerns. [The reading of the letter was accompanied by vociferous shouts of "Shame, shame."]

Mr. JOHN CARRICK then addressed the meeting, and after some spirited observations, proposed the following resolution:—

"That this meeting, taking into consideration the present awfully agitated state of the Connexion, do appoint a committee to prepare an address, in conjunction with the brethren who have been expelled in various circuits, to be presented to the ensuing Conference, in order to obtain a redress of grievances; and that the following persons be appointed a committee, with power to add to their number,—Messrs. Robinson, Lowthian, Carrick, and Cox."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Cox, and carried unanimously, and the meeting immediately afterwards adjourned.

The Chapel was crowded to excess during the whole of the proceedings, and many individuals were obliged to stand during the whole of the time. Mr. Haswell, with a few of his party, occupied a pew on the left side under the gallery, and appeared to be busily occupied in taking notes of the observations of the different speakers. Some of the remarks made in the course of the meeting, would, we should suppose, prove any thing but agreeable to him or his friends of the Conference.

Such was the independent spirit of the people, that the day after this triumphant meeting was held, numbers of active and pious members proceeded to the adjacent parts of the country for the purpose of forming branch Associations, and no doubt is entertained that, in a short time, the whole circuit will adopt the views, and support the efforts, of the parent Association.



## OLD CHRISTIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AGAINST CONFERENCE NOVELTIES.

At the request of a correspondent we have great pleasure in giving insertion to the following comparison between the primitive church government and the present *misgovernment* of the Methodist societies, which originally appeared in the *Circular* of December 31, 1830. We would earnestly beg to call the attention of the delegates who are about to assemble in Manchester to the principles here developed, founded, as they are, on the firm and incontrovertible basis of the word of God, and the practice of the primitive church.

==

We will set down in one column the rights of the New Testament Church, and in the opposite column the wrongs inflicted upon the members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

### *Rights of the New Testament Church.*

1

In the New Testament Church, the people were almost every thing, as is fully proved by Mosheim, in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

"The people were undoubtedly the first in authority, for the Apostles showed by their own example, that nothing of moment was to be carried on, or determined, without the consent of the assembly."

They expelled disorderly members.—1 Cor. v. 9 to 13 v.

They restored the penitent to church membership.—2 Cor. ii, 10.

Though in the expulsion of the incestuous Corinthian it is clear they were the executors of the doom awarded by the Apostles, whose authority in such matters extended both to the pastors and people; yet it is equally evident that *He* acknowledges at the same time the ordinary power in regard to discipline, lodged in the congregation.—Camp. Lectures on Eccles. Hist. vol. 1, p. 56.

2

In the New Testament Church the utmost freedom of opinion was allowed.

Of this we have abundant proof in the dispute on the subject of circumcision, mentioned in Acts, chap. 15.

The dispute was settled, as all affairs of moment ought to be, in an assembly composed of both the officers and private members of the church. To cut off all pretext that the private members were present only as witnesses, the decree made on that occasion runs as much in the name of the brethren as of the Apostles and Elders.—Verse 23.

3

The members of the new Testament Church were encouraged to exercise their own judgment on even the teachings of an infallible authority, and were urged to examine and judge for themselves, as the following texts will prove:

"Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

"Neither as being Lords over God's heritage."

"I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say."

### *Wrongs of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.*

1

In the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the people are nothing, absolutely nothing, the following trifles excepted; namely, raising all the money, and richly replenishing our funds, visiting the sick, carrying on prayer meetings, seeking and bringing back poor wanderers into the fold. Here they are *almost* every thing.

2

In the Wesleyan Methodist Church, freedom of discussion is frequently not allowed.

It is well known that a preacher frequently, of his own authority, stops the course of a debate, or refuses to put any motion which is not congenial with his priestly notions. Our people are also deprived of what is justly considered the proudest and dearest right of an Englishman—"the freedom of the press."

"Let no man, nor number of men in our connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, till it has first been proposed by the Conference."—Min. 1796.

3

The Wesleyan Members are required, by a late assumption of Conference, to submit to the interpretation of sadly erring men; both as it regards Christian doctrines, gospel ordinances, and moral discipline.—See Minutes, 1828.

"Of gospel doctrines, ordinances, and moral discipline," we do believe that the divinely instituted ministry are the divinely authorized expounders.

Does not this sentence contain all the abominable pretensions of Popery in embryo?

4

In the New Testament Church humility was the chief scriptural and legitimate claim to greatness; and active service the only valid claim to authority.—Matthew, xx, chap. 26, 27.—See Dr. Adam Clarke's note on the above passage.

5

The ministers of the New Testament Church were strictly prohibited arrogating to themselves titles and names of distinction and pre-eminence.

"Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ."

As the rulers of the church were expressly forbid to receive vain and proud titles, so the people were commanded not to give them.

"Call no man your father."

6

In the New Testament Church no such thing was known or permitted as an exclusive assembly of bishops, elders, and deacons, to make laws for the government of the church. Nor was there ever an instance known in which the people were denied a share in all consultations about church affairs.

"Nor was it till after the lapse of a few centuries that it began to be maintained as a doctrine, that those persons who did not belong to any of the sacred orders were absolutely unfit for being received into their councils, to deliberate and judge in holy things; that for the pastors to admit them would be to betray their trust and profane their office; and for such unhallowed men to arrogate any power in these matters would be no better than a sacrilegious usurpation.—Campbell, vol. 1, 296, 297.

7

The members of the New Testament church had a voice in the election of their own ministers, and also in the expulsion from the sacred office, if found unworthy.—Acts, xiv, 23.

Prove they had a voice in the election of their ministers?

Dr. Adam Clarke and other commentators prove that the word which our translators have rendered "ordained," signifies the holding up or stretching out the hand, as approving the choice of any person to a particular work. By the same process, Luke was appointed to travel with Paul.—1 Cor. viii, 19. Ignatius, in his epistle to the Philadelphians, uses the same term, and says, "Ye ought, as a church of God, to chuse your own bishop."

In conclusion the learned Doctor says,—  
"I believe the simple truth to be this—that in ancient times the people chose by the *cheirotoma* (lifting up of hands) their spiritual pastor."

The people also expelled unworthy ministers.—Rev. ii, 2, illustrated by 2 Cor. ii, 3; 1 John, iv, 1.

4

I leave my Wesleyan friends to judge for themselves, how far this rule is attended to in the election of the various officers in our church. I could say some strange things on this subject, but I forbear, as I wish to avoid personalities.

5

The Wesleyan Methodist preachers once saw and acknowledged the propriety of this command, and made a Conference law against the assumption of the title of Reverend by any of its members; but that law has long since been practically repealed. Plain Peter, James, and John, will not do now, without the pompous and vain addition of "Reverend;" a title bordering on blasphemy, when addressed to, or received by, proud and sinful mortals. God claims this title as peculiarly and exclusively his own. "Holy and reverend is His name."

6

In the Wesleyan Methodist Church, not only the great bulk of the people, but the entire body of local ministers, leaders, stewards, and trustees, are excluded from all share in the deliberations of our Conference; nor are they allowed so much as a negative vote on any laws or regulations the preachers may make.

7

The Wesleyan Methodists have no choice in the matter; they must submit to receive those whom the Conference appoints, whether they derive edification, instruction, and comfort, under their ministry, or the contrary. And though they have reason to question the validity of the call to the work of the ministry of some few—because, like Diotrephes, they love to have the pre-eminence, and behave in other respects as he did—yet, they are not only expected to sit under their ministry, but support them too.

8

The New Testament Church was governed by the laws of Christ, and considered "The sacred code which he left was the magna charta of Christian privilege and duty, and equal to all the exigencies of his people to the end of time." They viewed his word as profitable for doctrine, correction, &c. &c.; nor were any prudential regulations which might be deemed necessary at all binding, except they were first sanctioned by the people. Nor can the church part with its rights or power in these respects, to any man or number of men on earth.

One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren.

The Lord is our lawgiver;

The Lord is our judge;

The Lord is our king; He will save us.

8

The government of the Wesleyan Methodist Church is perfectly ministerial. Our preachers exercise an exclusive and irresponsible power, which, if not removed out of their possession, will prove our downfall. Such power ought not to be intrusted to mortals; it would corrupt the holiest men on earth. What is tyranny but irresponsible power?

Stand fast, ye Methodists, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free, nor suffer yourselves to be any longer entangled with the yoke of bondage.

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### THE EXPULSION FROM OFFICE OF MR. COULTHURST, LEADER AND LOCAL PREACHER IN THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT.

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At the leaders' meeting in Wesley Chapel, on the 25th February last, Mr. Dixon said he had received orders from Mr. Marsden to bring before the meeting the case of Mr. Coulthurst, who had allowed Mr. Beynon, an expelled member, to meet in his class, and something was added about Mr. Coulthurst introducing a book into the class, and writing down names for the Association. He stated that Mr. Marsden had seen Mr. Coulthurst twice on that subject, and concluded by saying that Mr. Coulthurst would probably wish to say something upon the charge now brought before the meeting.

MR. COULTHURST said, that he thought it would be unnecessary for him to state any thing for the information of Mr. Dixon, as he had no doubt he was in possession of all the facts of the case already, but for the information of the meeting he would state a few particulars. On Sunday morning, 25th January last, as he (Mr. Coulthurst) was coming out from meeting his class he stepped into the vestry, where Mr. Marsden was sitting just previous to his going into the pulpit, to ask him how he did, when Mr. Marsden addressed him as follows:—Brother Coulthurst, I am informed that Mr. Beynon continues to meet in your class as usual?

MR. COULTHURST.—He does, Sir.

MR. MARSDEN.—Do you think this is quite orderly?

MR. COULTHURST.—I do not know that it is contrary to order; since Mr. Beynon was expelled contrary to Methodist law and usage, I neither could nor would forbid him to meet in my class.

MR. MARSDEN.—Very well, I must see you again, and have further conversation with you on this subject.

On the 18th February the following conversation took place at the close of the leaders' meeting. Mr. Marsden had taken Mr. Coulthurst's book into special custody, and upon application being made for it, he said, "Brother Coulthurst, I want to speak to you," and requested him and Mr. Joseph Russell to go into the private vestry-room.

MR. MARSDEN.—Brother Coulthurst, I observe there is a name not crossed out in your book; I mean Mr. Beynon's. Does he still continue to meet with you?

MR. COULTHURST.—Yes, Sir.

MR. MARSDEN.—You know that this is not Methodistical; Mr. Beynon is not now a member, having been expelled from the society.

Mr. COULTHURST.—I know that he was expelled, and that contrary to all law and usage; but I am aware also that our rules enjoin one only condition of membership, and that is, “forsaking all sin, and expressing a desire to flee from the wrath to come,” and Mr. Beynon, I believe, answers that description.

Mr. RUSSELL.—Was not Mr. Beynon expelled by the leaders’ meeting?

Mr. COULTHURST.—No, Sir; you either do or ought to know differently, for you were there; and did I not stand up just before Mr. Marsden pronounced the sentence, and request permission from Mr. Marsden to make a motion, that if Mr. Beynon was to be expelled it might be according to rule, and I then read the law bearing upon the case, but I was answered by Mr. Marsden saying “*No, it cannot be done in that way;*” and then immediately he pronounced the sentence of expulsion without taking the sense of the meeting. I will not take upon myself the responsibility of forbidding Mr. Beynon to meet in my class, nor do I think it proper without the decision of the leaders’ meeting.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Then, brother, if you are not disposed to act Methodistically, you had better resign your office.

Mr. COULTHURST.—When I do that, Sir, it will be when a majority of the leaders’ meeting shall have decided that I ought to do so.

[Here this conversation ended.]

Mr. COULTHURST rebutted the second count in the charge, and denied his having taken down names in his class for the Association, and then contended that Mr. Beynon had been illegally dealt with in refusing him a trial by the local preachers’ meeting, and challenged Mr. Dixon and the meeting to produce a single instance where it had been otherwise, and added, “I have been a member of the local preachers’ meeting for thirty-four years, and never knew one.” (Here Mr. Coulthurst read the law. See Min. 1797, vol. 1, p. 375.)

Mr. DIXON.—The law only allows the local preachers’ meeting the right to admit, but says nothing about the right of putting off.

Mr. COULTHURST.—That is all quibble; for the fair inference is,—if the local preachers have a right to admit, they have an equal right to put off.

Mr. ASHTON thought he had a case in point, and mentioned one that occurred at Pitt-street, and said the case of that brother was not heard at the local preachers’ meeting.

Mr. COULTHURST.—Sir, your assertion proves that either you were not at the meeting, or that you are in error on this point: the local preachers were specially summoned in that case, the person accused being himself present.

Mr. DIXON.—The plea set up by the local preachers and leaders for their right of appeal to their own meetings *is something like what was in use in the worst days of Popery*, which shielded an aggressor from the wholesome discipline of the church.

Mr. COULTHURST.—I think what you have now said does not reflect very honourably on either the local preachers or the leaders’ meetings.

Mr. DIXON.—I think we are *wandering from the point*, since the proper business of the meeting is to consider whether Mr. Coulthurst has any right to allow Mr. Beynon to meet in his class, and, instead of that, we have been discussing the laws of Methodism.

Mr. FROST here rose and moved, that as Mr. Coulthurst had acted improperly in allowing Mr. Beynon to meet in his class, he should be instructed by this meeting not to do so in future. [This motion, it is thought, was seconded by Mr. Joseph Russell.]

Mr. COULTHURST.—Is the door of the church to be for ever closed against an expelled member?

Mr. ASHTON.—No;—but he must come in in the regular way, by being brought forward at the leaders’ meeting.

Mr. COULTHURST.—Then I propose Mr. Beynon to this meeting, as a proper person for membership.

Here Mr. Ashton gave out a very significant laugh, and Mr. Coulthurst expressed his opinion that the subject was of too serious a nature to be treated in that manner, and that the transactions of that evening would carry their report into eternity.



Mr. DIXON then put Mr. Frost's motion, and it was carried by a *majority*, fifteen leaders being present.

Mr. COULTHURST inquired what would be the penalty if he could not comply with the decision of the meeting.

Mr. DIXON said that could not be gone into at present, but it would follow, of course, and added, "It now remains for Mr. Coulthurst to say to the meeting what he intends to do."

Mr. COULTHURST replied,—“In what I am going to say I have no hope of making any impression upon this meeting, so as in any way to alter its decision, but so long as a private member can be expelled from society at the will of the superintendent, contrary to the sense of the leaders' meeting”—(Interruption from Mr. Russell and Mr. Ashton, who said “We cannot hear the characters of our ministers reflected upon; you ought to state facts.”)—Mr. C. resumed. These are stubborn facts; witness Mr. Beynon's expulsion, as well as others. (Continued interruption.) Mr. C. then appealed to the chair, and claimed to be heard, observing, that on what I am going to say I mean to ground the reasons for my conduct.

Mr. DIXON.—Let him be heard; it is nothing new; we have often heard it before.

Mr. COULTHURST.—So long as a leader can be deprived of his office by the superintendent, without the consent of the leaders; so long as he can prevent all free discussion in quarterly meetings; so long as the Conference claims the right to make laws and enforce them on the Connexion against their consent; these, I say, must form some of the reasons why I cannot comply with the decision of this meeting, and if my expulsion from office be the consequence, I would even prefer that to a violation of my principles.

Mr. ASHTON said, that as Mr. Coulthurst had been so absurd as to set up his judgment in opposition to his brethren in their solemn decision, it was indispensably necessary that the reins of discipline should be kept tight, or we should be like a rope of sand, and moved *that Mr. Coulthurst be removed from office.*

Before the motion was seconded, Mr. COULTHURST begged to make a few remarks to this effect:—“I think it singular that you have acted somewhat differently to me, in only intending to deprive me of office, and allowing me to hold my membership, while, at the same time, you have denied my brethren the same privilege, I cannot account for such a stretch of charity. The meeting has made many objections to Mr. Beynon meeting in class, but has made none to receiving his class money, he having paid that up to the last week.

[Here the meeting was greatly agitated, Mr. ASHTON roundly asserting if any money had been received, it had been paid in under *false pretences.*

Mr. COULTHURST denied the charge, and despised the insinuation; the money, he said, had been paid to him as class-money, and he had paid it to the stewards as such.

Mr. ASHTON.—You ought to have told the stewards whose money it was.

Mr. COULTHURST.—When you pay money to the stewards is it ever asked whose money it is, or do you ever inform them? I paid the money in the regular way, and the stewards checked the book and handed it to Mr. Marsden, and if he found out that Mr. Beynon's name was uncrossed out in the book, it would be an easy matter, by drawing his finger along the line to discover that Mr. Beynon's class-money had been paid in here.

Mr. ASHTON strongly recommended that the money should be returned.

Mr. Coulthurst's book was called for, but not having it with him, the steward requested him to name the sum, and he would return it to Mr. Beynon.

Mr. COULTHURST refused to furnish the information, and hoped the stewards would not demean themselves by making such an offer, as he was quite sure a gentleman like Mr. Beynon would not accept the money if it were tendered.

Mr. AUSTIN begged that, if possible, the steward would find out what had been paid, and return the money to Mr. Beynon, for, if not, the circumstance would be put into the *Lantern* next week.

Mr. COULTHURST said he was much obliged to Mr. Austin for the idea, for it was a capital hit.

Mr. COULTHURST again resumed,—“I have been a member of society upwards of 45 years, 35 years a leader, and 34 a local preacher. I demur against taking my trial for the following reasons:—1st. I object to the right of Mr. Russell and Mr.

Ashton voting in this meeting as being contrary to fair dealing, the former holding a seat in the Pitt-street leaders' meeting and voting there, the other living in the North Circuit and meeting classes in both circuits, contrary to the agreement entered into when the circuit was divided.

[Here Mr. Coulthurst was interrupted by Mr. Ashton exclaiming,—“Demur on,—demur on!” and distorted his countenance most ridiculously, for which he was pointedly rebuked by Mr. Coulthurst, who said he felt deep surprise that a gentleman like him should be guilty of such conduct.]

2nd. I am a local preacher, and have a right to be tried by my local brethren.

3rd. I am a Trustee for two chapels, for the debts on which I have been twice threatened to be sent to gaol.

Mr. ASHTON.—Where? Where?

Mr. COULTHURST.—Sir, if you wish to know, one is in Blackburn, and the other is in the Skipton circuit.

Mr. TAYLOR here rose to leave the meeting, but was requested by Mr. Coulthurst to stay a little; he (Mr. Taylor) then put down his hat and stick, and said,—“My brethren, I am heartily weary of this kind of work: cutting off and refusing the right hand of fellowship to Mr. Beynon, and others; and though I am not a member of the Association, nor approve of its principles, yet I could no more refuse such men as these from holding Church fellowship, than I could think of taking this chapel on my back, and running away with it; and here is my respected friend (pointing to Mr. Coulthurst) who has been a member for forty-five years, against whom you have proved nothing. Why, you show no mercy; there is no mercy here. I beg and intreat the meeting to put an end to this kind of work, and allow Mr. Coulthurst time to consider the subject.

Mr. DIXON.—O yes; if Mr. Coulthurst requests it, no doubt the meeting will grant such a request; and if the brethren who have left us will withdraw from the Association, and acknowledge their error, they would gladly again be received into the bosom of the church.—[“Yes, yes,” from Mr. Ashton and others.]—Mr. Dixon further said, in observing upon what Mr. Taylor had advanced,—that things had come to an awful crisis, and that the two systems could not work together; that the principles of the Association now in operation had a tendency to uproot Methodism to its very foundation.

Mr. COULTHURST said, that during the term of years he had had the honour of being connected with the Methodist body, he flattered himself it never had been disgraced by his conduct, nor had he any cause to be ashamed to own himself as one of her sons: he further observed, he had no favour to ask; he wanted none; all that he wanted in his case was justice, and then prepared to leave the meeting.

Mr. DIXON.—Brother Coulthurst, you ought not to leave at this stage of the business; you use the meeting very ill by so doing.

Mr. COULTHURST.—I think I do not use the meeting half so ill as the meeting has used me, and I now wish you a good night.

After Mr. COULTHURST had retired, Mr. Ashton's motion was seconded, put, and carried, that because Mr. Coulthurst had set up his judgment against the brethren, and could not forbid Mr. Beynon to meet in his class, *he was deprived of office as leader.*

Sunday, the 22d of February, was the time appointed for the renewal of tickets. They met accordingly, and after waiting half an hour they sent over to Mr. Dixon's, requesting him to come and renew the tickets, as was specified on the note. He informed the messenger that he had only just returned from burying a corpse in the chapel yard, and said there must be some mistake about it, but supposed they should have them at some other time. The circumstances above detailed occurred on the Wednesday evening following. The class met on the next Lord's day after Mr. C.'s expulsion from office, expecting to receive tickets, and probably a new leader to take charge of the class; but no one came. The following Sunday, March 8, they assembled as usual at the time appointed; but found, to their great surprise, that the door was locked against them. Upon inquiry, the chapel-keeper informed them that she had received special directions, from Mr. Frost and Mr. Franceys, the stewards, not again to admit them into the upper vestry of Wesley Chapel. In the evening, Mr. Marsden announced that the class which meets in the upper vestry at nine o'clock, (mark, that which had been locked out in the morning of that day,) would meet next Sunday morning for tickets, at the usual time and place, and that a new leader would be appointed.

## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—On Sunday se'nnight the quarterly love-feast of the expelled portion of the Methodist Society in Liverpool, was held at the Music-hall, when not fewer than 1,500 persons assembled. Mr. Coulthurst, whose expulsion (for allowing an expelled brother still to attend his class) is narrated in our present number, presided on the occasion. The testimonies of experimental religion were clear and decisive, and a warm glow of pious feeling pervaded the assembled multitude. On the Tuesday evening following, the quarterly meeting of the Association leaders and officers was held at the same place, when the class-leaders, stewards, and members of the committee, in number from 80 to 90, supped together after transacting the usual business. The state of the classes was represented as highly satisfactory, numbers being weekly added from without as well as from within the Methodist societies, many of whom have been savingly converted by the instrumentality of the Association classes. Several of the leaders addressed the meeting, inculcating the necessity of strict attention to the pastoral duties which have devolved on them in consequence of the long, lamented, shameful neglect of this important part of their office by the preachers.

*Hull.*—Mr. R. Knight, local preacher and leader; Mr. W. Maples, local preacher and leader; and Mr. J. Wright, (who has, for several years, been engaged in the Sunday schools, latterly as a superintendent,) have been suspended for six months. Throughout the whole business the preachers have manifested the greatest caution; and this sentence, which all consider to be the same as expulsion, has been resorted to for the purpose of getting rid, if possible, of the odium of the latter measure: they are beginning to see that by expelling by wholesale they overshoot their mark, and defeat the objects they seek to promote.—Mr. Wm. Wright, local preacher, has been also suspended for six months. Several others, local preachers and leaders, who have acted with them from the beginning, are daily expecting to be called upon to answer for their conduct.—Mr. G. Cookman, trustee and leader, a man of long standing in the church, of great influence, and who is universally respected, has sent in his resignation.

We have just received a small pamphlet issued by Mr. Cookman, containing a "Vindication of Principles and Character; occasioned by the late proceedings in the Methodist Society in Hull, to which is prefixed an Explanatory Address on withdrawing from the Society." The pamphlet is written throughout in a most Christian and candid spirit; and although we sincerely regret that any circumstances should have induced so valuable a member of a religious society as Mr. Cookman to take this step, yet, perhaps, looking at his particular case in all its bearings, no other course of procedure satisfactory to himself was left open. The subjoined extracts will explain to our readers the circumstances.

Mr. Cookman, along with many of his brethren in Hull, having had his attention directed for some time to the subject of Methodistical grievances, was anxious that Conference should be memorialized, and negotiations for redress carried on, through the quarterly meeting, the only official medium for such purpose. To his great disappointment, that door was closed against them. Under these circumstances an Association was formed, and the public meeting held, of which we have already given an account in the *Lantern*. Mr. Cookman received notice, on the 20th Feb. last, that charges would be preferred against him at a special leaders' meeting, for taking part in the proceedings on that occasion.

"At the time appointed one of the leaders present submitted the following proposition to the consideration of the meeting, professing his object and desire to be an amicable and conciliatory adjustment of the painful business:—

"This meeting, deeply deploring the melancholy discord now existing in our Society, and anxious to avert the trials of members now pending, without compromising the discipline and character of the Connexion, resolves first,—To abandon all proceedings of trial, on condition of the parties giving a distinct and individual pledge, not to promote, directly or indirectly, any illegal association professing to alter, or to amend the constitution of Methodism. Second,—That on the tendering of this pledge, this meeting renews its assurances of confidence and esteem towards the parties thus concurring."

"The proposition being adopted by the meeting, I was requested to say *yea* or *nay* to the pledge embodied in it; and the following are the sentiments which I stated, as explicitly as I could, in reference to that pledge. I declared that in all religious matters I could not make any promise which might infringe my liberty of conscience; and read Mr. Wesley's opinion on that point, from the Minutes of the first Conference which he held, as conveying precisely the sense in which I wished to be understood. I then proceeded to declare, that if by the phrase in the resolution, '*the Constitution of Methodism*' were understood the *Laws of Pacification of 1795*, and

the Concessions of 1797, in their common sense meaning, I could most readily pledge myself not to attend any illegal meeting, or use any other means, 'directly or indirectly,' having for their object 'to alter or amend that Constitution;' for 'that' I said, 'is all I want, and all I desire. That is old Methodism, and I wish for nothing more.' This avowal appeared to give universal satisfaction to the meeting, and all present, as I thought, were well pleased that the business had come to so amicable a termination."

"At an adjourned meeting, the friends, whose sentence had been deferred, stated their willingness to take the pledge I had given the week before. I was then called upon to repeat my pledge; having done so, the Chairman declared that I had put upon it a different sense from that in which the previous meeting had received it,—stating that the Resolution contemplated only,—the Constitution,—that is, the laws and discipline of Methodism, as now understood and administered in the Connexion. Upon this I declared, that having explicitly stated to the meeting the sense in which I understood the Constitution, and my pledge, in conjunction with such statement, having been accepted the week before, it was impossible for me now to submit to any other version; and rather than do so, I would fall back into the situation in which I stood before my trial. Then followed a long and desultory discussion, the Chairman, on the one hand, pressing his new definition of the constitution, and I, on the other, adhering to my former one; until, at length, I became fully convinced that there was no course for me to take, but either submit to accept the pledge, in the new version of it, or withdraw from the Society. One of these courses I promised the meeting I would forthwith adopt, having, however, during the discussion, determined, in my own mind, that I would follow the latter course."

Mr. Cookman ultimately sent the following note to the Superintendent, accompanied by his class-book and ticket of membership:—

"Hull, March 12, 1835.

"DEAR SIR,—I was not a little surprised to find, on Monday evening, that new grounds were taken, with a determination either to make me sacrifice my principles and character, or to compel me to withdraw from the society.

"To submit to the former, no power on earth shall compel me; and the only alternative now left me, is to submit to the latter. This was the course I determined upon, towards the conclusion of the discussion.

"I have, therefore, sent you my class book and ticket, the tokens of office and of membership, and withdraw from your society.

"I felt assured, however, from the proceedings and decision of the previous leaders' meeting, when I pledged myself to conform to the resolutions then submitted to me, that such a result would have been avoided. But, alas! how men, even good men, will violate their pledges and their engagements, to support their corporate character.

"But I will say no more at present on this subject; and will endeavour to put the most favourable construction I can upon these anomalies in the *Economy of Methodism*. Indeed, Sir, at my age, and with my habits, this is the prevailing desire of my heart, to finish my life in the fear and favour of God, and to be at peace with all men.

"I am, yours, very respectfully,

"To the Rev. Wm. Clegg."

"GEORGE COOKMAN."

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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In declining our polite invitation to the Music-hall, the editor of the *Illuminator* reluctantly admits the truth of the anecdote respecting Dr. Clarke; not, of course, in a plain straight-forward way, but virtually. He says, "It is sufficient for us to state, that Mr. Hickling, whose house was Dr. Clarke's home in Birmingham for the LAST twenty years," [it is nearly three years since the Doctor died!] "and where the expression complained (approved?) of WAS UTTERED, positively denies the truth of the statement." First he asserts the expression *was* uttered, and then he says Mr. Hickling *denies* it. Which of the two wisecracks are we to believe? Either Mr. Hickling must have made an unfounded assertion, or the editor is incapable of expressing his meaning intelligibly; he is welcome to either horn of the dilemma. Victory over such a writer is what every member of the Association would be ashamed of in any other cause than that of truth. We have offered to produce direct testimony of the accuracy of our statement, which the *Illuminator* twists into an assertion that "the Doctor *may* have given utterance to the expression elsewhere;" so much for "Illuminating" candour! If, instead of a turn to be offensive without talents to be severe, our benighted contemporary possessed the honesty to be candid, or the ability to convince, we should have no objection to a continuance of the controversy; but we are weary of exposing such contemptible shuffling.

"*Fas est ab hoste doceri*" has been hoisted as a motto by the *Illuminator* of Wednesday last. To this we have no objection, as we shall presently show. A pamphlet published some years ago by Mr. Mark Robinson, of Beverley, is sneeringly recommended to the delegates about to assemble at Manchester, as containing a constitution "as good as new," &c. for their adoption.

"We thank thee, Jew, for teaching us that word."

We "happen to possess a copy" of the aforesaid pamphlet, which contains, amongst other matter, several pithy extracts from writings of the preachers and others which we suspect will not be quite relished by some of the "powers that be," and which we shall take care to bring before the public eye. One *moreau* we have inserted in the present number.



It has been said, "The Devil can quote Scripture when it suits his own purposes." This we have always supposed to be a sort of hyperbolic assertion; but we can scarcely doubt its truth when we see the editor of a publication, whose sole occupation appears to be to blacken the reputation of individuals who happen to differ from him, by every species of reckless assertion, vile slander, and dark insinuation, hypocritically introducing passages from the Sacred Record in the same paragraphs which display the existence of feelings the most abhorrent from its precepts. It is really awful—it is enough to make one's blood run cold, to see the words of our blessed Redeemer inserted as an introduction to a farrago of sneering imputations and wretched attempts at sarcasm. Should this be doubted, let any person not entirely blinded by prejudice read the notices to correspondents in the two last numbers of the *Illuminator*, and if disgust be not the predominant feeling, we can only say that we sincerely pity him.

We have unavoidably fallen considerably in arrear with articles from a number of respected correspondents. We must request their patience a little longer, and we will endeavour to give them all an opportunity of appealing to the public.

Our correspondent Y., of Todmorden, will find his wishes attended to in the present number.

We have to acknowledge also the following communications:—R. Urie, Glasgow—A. Harrison, Liverpool—Y. G. M.—Anon, Manchester—C., Birmingham.

An account of the proceedings at the quarterly meeting, Pitt-street chapel, and Mr. Gordon's third letter, (already in type,) shall appear in our next.

*No. 13 will be published on Wednesday, the 22d of April.*

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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TO WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

## LETTER III.

BRETHREN,—I had intended, in this letter, to enter upon a clear proof of the position I laid down in my last, that Methodism, throughout its whole range, as far as possible excluded popular interference, and was determinately opposed to the just rights of the greater number of the members of the Connexion, as those rights were stated by me. The observations in the fifth number of the *Illuminator*, on the subject of ministerial responsibility, as existing in our community, would give ample occasion for the exhibition of such proof. I find myself, however, obliged to postpone my remarks on this subject to a future communication, as it is necessary in order to complete my former course of observation, and also fully to meet the statements in the first part of the remarks of my opponent, that I should devote a few paragraphs to the examination of the spiritual influence of that exclusive system of church government which I have already reprobated as in itself unjust. The subject of conferential responsibility may, however, be considered as in a great measure decided, by some sentences which I read this day in a newspaper, as uttered in the Court of Chancery by Mr. Rolfe, one of the counsel for conducting the case of the Conference against Dr. Warren:—"It was quite competent to the Conference to legislate, and to take from or add to the power of any law, just as it thought fit"—"The power he (Mr. Rolfe) claimed for the Conference was *irresponsible and irresistible*." Mark well! This is stated to have been the doctrine advanced in a court of justice, as one of the grounds on which the agents of the Conference supported their case. "FAITHFUL are the wounds of a friend."

The writer to whose observations I shall at present principally confine myself, has thus expressed his opinions:—"Let spiritual government be placed, in any community, in secular hands, and from the well-known influence of wealth and rank, it will fall into the hands of that class of professing Christians. Then is it not in the nature of things that these should carry a leaven of worldly influence with them into the church?" You may perhaps understand the meaning of these sentences, in spite of their inaccurate construction. "It is highly probable that if the preachers of the New Connexion had been left to form their own plans, to rest on their own resources and exertions, to contemplate the spiritual ruin and wants of the world through the medium of those views which their commission teaches, without the *patronage, counsels, and calculations* of lay delegates, they would have made much greater progress." The position which these remarks are designed to

establish is this:—That preachers, as a class, are less likely to yield to worldliness, and to check the course of gospel truth, than the lay members of the church are. Now, if this were conscientiously believed to be the case, it would not follow that, on that ground, the ministers should *themselves* seize the reins of government. Let this superiority be *proved*, to the satisfaction of the community who are to be governed, and let *that community* act accordingly; giving to the ministry, as they might see fit, the benefit of that superiority. Surely, the ministers themselves should not, having decided that they possess such superiority, assume the station to which, on its account, *they* may think themselves entitled, whether such decision and assumption be consistent with the general opinion of the people or not! Surely, *their* ideas concerning *their own superiority* should not be suffered to interfere with and destroy the *rights* of their brethren! If, therefore, this position on which I am remarking be allowed, it still brings us to the principle of *popular interference* for which I am contending. But there is another view of this matter, in which this superiority, if it could be satisfactorily proved, as it cannot, (for its proof would require too nice a balancing of variable circumstances to be applied to practical purposes,) would not support the arrangements which our author endeavours to defend. He has not merely to prove that the ministry is *superior* to the laity: to serve his purpose, he should show that the former is *immaculate*; for, if this be not shown, the reasons for the existence of efficient checks on the part of those for whom the preachers act have not been answered. If the clergy are under *any temptations*, why should it be supposed that when left to themselves they are not likely to yield to those temptations? They possess the same frail nature as the laity. Nothing can answer the case, as far as I can see, but that for which I am arguing, namely, such a supervision and interference, on the part of all those who are interested in the welfare of the Connexion, as may form a counterpoise to a temptation opposed to the general benefit, *whoever* may be the parties to which such temptation is applied. But where does this superiority lie? In the office which Methodist preachers sustain? Certainly not; for that office is held by the local ministers and leaders, as well as by them. In their freedom from secular employments? Certainly not; because they do not admit those among their lay brethren who are free from secular employments to a share of their power; and, also, because they *are not free* from secular employments. Are not the itinerant preachers booksellers? Booksellers, the nature of whose trade *might* perhaps oblige them to take out hawkers' licenses. Are they not, besides conducting this bookselling as a part of their *regular duty*, deeply involved in all the secular, the money transactions of the Connexion? I forbear to descend with these questions, though "*Difficile est satiram non scribere.*"

Brethren,—I invite you to a dispassionate examination of the manner in which ministers, who are not fettered by the "*counsels and calculations*" of their lay brethren, have endeavoured to purge out from themselves the leaven of worldly influence, and manifested a disinterested attention to the moral wants of the world. You need not, in this examination, go beyond the proceedings of Methodist preachers. There is one kind of influence, as exerted by the laity, to which, I freely allow, our so far immaculate clergy have not yielded. I mean the influence of *talent and knowledge*. On these things they have commonly looked

with suspicion, if not with dread. They are dangerous to a system which, in any measure, seeks support from *political concealment* or *literary quackery*. To an influence, however, of another kind, namely, that of *money*, when its possession is not connected with the abominations to which I have just referred, and so constitutes the characters which in cant phrase are called "*our respectable friends*," I am afraid it will be found that these gentlemen have yielded not a little. Are not such individuals almost exclusively consulted in the adoption of plans which it may be absolutely necessary to make a show of submitting to the people? and are not the arrangements which are established, *and especially with regard to disputed points*, chiefly formed for the purpose of placating *them*? A plan is devised for the alteration of the character of the ministry among us. Who are consulted but *our respectable friends*? And as long as *they whom it pleases* support it by "the well-known influence of their wealth and rank," the complaints of the mass of the societies are to be disregarded, and its injurious influence upon the peace of the general body to be scoffed at. Look throughout the sphere in which the operations of Methodism have been subjected to *your* view, and see if the influence of individuals like those to whom I am referring has not been put in the place of the influence of the whole body whose welfare has been at stake. In all such cases, the want of the principle of general interference, for which I am contending, has produced the *worldliness* which the writer in the *Illuminator* attributes to lay delegation. "Wealth and rank" are most likely to become injurious when the constitution with which they are connected does not attempt to bend them to the interest of the whole community, by giving the power of promoting that interest into the hands of all; when it leaves the *ruling body* without a check which may prevent it from yielding to the evil influence of such things.

But is there not such a thing as *worldliness* among *ministers themselves*? Is there no attempt *among us* to form the ministry into a class essentially superior to the other members of the community? Is there not the creation of gradations among *the preachers themselves*, gradations of the most arbitrary kind, which originate *patronage, emulation, plotting, partisanship, and subserviency*, as extensively as such things may exist in connexion with the governments of the kingdoms of this world? There are other temptations to be guarded against besides the love of money: there is, for instance, the *love of honour*; to that *ministers* are at least as much subject as *their people*, and its influence is as injurious in the production of worldliness as any other which can be mentioned. And in the estimation of the worldliness of the Methodist Conference, arising from its assumption of exalted rank, and its plentiful formation of honourable gradations among its own members, let it be remembered by you that the system I am reprobating *confines* these honours to a party which has not the benefit of such a popular check as may attempt to turn them to the good of the whole Connexion.

Will the history of the Methodist Conference and its representatives prove that, when left to themselves, they have disinterestedly regarded the spiritual welfare of those over whom they have placed themselves, having the progress of gospel truth only in view? which is another question suggested by the sentences quoted above, from the paper which I endeavour to keep in my view. Look at the Conference itself! Its late acts have made it A POLITICAL UNION. To notice only what



has appeared in its Minutes, although *they* do not afford the whole of the evidence on this subject:—It declares that certain political opinions embrace the sentiments of the Connexion, and that a certain political question involves its “public credit.” It thanks one man for upholding political opinions of one kind, and punishes another man for advocating those of an opposite character; and it proposes to the latter the abstaining from such advocacy as the *test of his ministerial fitness*. The *spiritual interest* of the Connexion is not, in this case, the interest promoted; but the Conference, by a *departure from its religious character*, has become an agent for the advancement of one side of a political struggle. If the minister whom these proceedings excluded from the Connexion were in other respects qualified for the ministry, the *spiritual welfare* of the people has been so far sacrificed to the *political authority* of the Conference; and the same sacrifice is made in all cases in which the agitation consequent upon the introduction of political debates into the church has injured the religious character of any part of the community. To me, this formation of Methodist preachers into a *political club* is exceedingly disgusting, and especially as the politics which they set themselves to uphold are such as oppress the working classes of the country, from whom they chiefly derive their support. Turn to the conduct of the representatives of the Conference when they are among the people. They exclude individuals from the societies, not on account of moral or religious criminality, but on account of proceedings directed to the alteration of a polity adopted by the preachers, which they consider to be evil; proceedings which, if the *spiritual welfare* of the societies is the sole object to be promoted, should be freely allowed, as long as they do not involve such criminality; and the expulsions on account of which, with all their injurious consequences, are directly opposed to that welfare; and even when the strong arm of ministerial power is not stretched out for the purpose of such expulsion, a *polity unconnected with, and opposed to, the proper interest* of the different societies, is made the rule by which the preachers most commonly conduct the affairs with which they have to do. Individuals are honoured or disgraced, officers are selected or rejected, business is introduced or excluded, discussions are encouraged or repressed, arrangements are adopted or counteracted, not on account of the adaptation of such matters, in the minds of the meetings concerned, to the welfare of the people whom those meetings should represent, but according to their connexion with the polity of an assembly *in which such meetings have no direct voice, the welfare of the people* being treated as of importance *inferior to such polity*. I know an instance of this which lately happened, and in which a superintendent, rather than choose individuals, as circuit stewards for a respectable circuit, whose Conferential character did not please him, but whose fitness for the office in all other respects he was willing to acknowledge, nominated a person who *possessed the incapacity of an ignorance of the art of writing*. I mention this instance the more gladly, inasmuch as I highly respect the person who was so nominated, and freely confess that the superintendent is one who, as far as his blind and obstinate adherence to his system will permit him, endeavours to do what is right. I might confirm the statement which this circumstance illustrates by numerous other facts; but it will be unnecessary to do so, for I am persuaded it will be borne out by your own experience; and I would seriously put it to you, if facts which

have come under your observation have not established it as one, descriptive of the way in which Methodist affairs are generally conducted among you. and especially at troublous times like the present, which are calculated to manifest most clearly the principles on which priestly conduct is built.

Brethren,—The remarks offered to your notice in this letter are especially worthy of your serious consideration, because the injury which they point out as arising from the present constitution of things, is an injury done to the *spiritual efficiency* of your community; an injury, therefore, which demands a prompt and effective remedy on your part, *as you value your spiritual welfare*. I assure you I would not take the trouble of investigating this subject, if I were not convinced that it involved the religious and moral advantage of a body whose interest is on many accounts peculiarly dear to my heart. The interest which thus arrays itself against your benefit is that of *power*; power sought by Methodist preachers, either for its own sake, or for the sake of the honour and profit which arise from it; not that rightly exercised power which exerts itself in quickening the energies of others to what is good, but that baleful manifestation of it which *strives to bend and subdue others to the will of its possessor*; power which does not merely exist throughout the country in the persons of *individual preachers*, but which is *concentrated* by the union of the whole body of the preachers in assemblies closed to the people, and, by the influence of that union, is diffused through the community in all its concentrated energy.

I am, yours, affectionately,

Dudley, March 27, 1835.

JOHN GORDON.

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#### PROCEEDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

EXPULSION FROM OFFICE OF MESSRS. BENNION, THORPE, DAY, STORY, LINDSAY, AND MARTIN, CLASS LEADERS IN THE SOUTH CIRCUIT.

"Though the Conference expresses an *opinion* on such subjects, *leave* is not given to the people to *think* the contrary."—This favourite doctrine appears to be rigidly acted upon by Mr. Marsden, who, arrogating to himself the attribute of the Deity, pretends to understand the thoughts of his fellow-worms better than themselves. Mr. Marsden's opinion on morality at least possesses the merit of novelty. In a Christian community we know of no morality save that of the Bible; and, *ex cathedra*, to pronounce that a man who neglects public and private prayer, class-meetings, the sacrament, and all other divine ordinances, is "not grossly immoral," is, to say the least, a doctrine "more honoured in the breach than in the observance."

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*Pitt-street Chapel, 19th March, 1835.*—The Rev. GEORGE MARSDEN commenced the business of the meeting by remarking, at great length, on the impropriety of official members signing their names to documents intended for publication. The names which were published (in the *Lantern*) first in the list, laid him under the necessity of adopting measures very painful to his feelings. He had since then received another letter, of which he took no notice, thinking the brethren had written it hastily; and afterwards he received a third, more numerously signed. He was sorry to see sentiments expressed which, if acted upon, would overthrow Methodism altogether; he had laid the last letter in his desk, without letting any one see it, conceiving that it had been written in a moment of excitement: but how was he astonished, when he was given to understand that it was published in a newspaper subscribed by the same persons, and, subsequently, in a periodical work (to wit, the *Lantern*.) He would read that part of the letter which was so very objectionable,—“We deprecate excommunication on any ground except

that of gross immorality, and consider it a most dangerous experiment upon the peace and liberties of our connexion." Persons entertaining such sentiments as these could not possibly hold any office in the Methodist society: they might be private members, because the opinions of private members were not interfered with; but no person could hold office with such sentiments, as they would overthrow the rules made by Messrs. J. and C. Wesley, and he believed *there was not one word altered in them—they were as Mr. Wesley left them!* He quoted several rules, and observed, that a person who held the sentiments he had quoted might not attend to one of the rules, and yet not be grossly immoral: he might entertain Socinian, or even Deistical notions, and not be grossly immoral—never read the word of God, use family or private prayer, attend public worship, class-meetings, or sacraments, and yet not be grossly immoral; so that no person professing these sentiments could hold office in the Methodist society. He observed that two of the brethren, Thomas Johnson and George Holliwell, had withdrawn from the Association, and asked brother Bennion, whose name was, consequently, at the head of the list, if he had not affixed his signature to the paper.

Mr. BENNION.—You have grossly misconstrued the words, Sir, and given to them a meaning never thought of by any of the parties: they detest the sentiments thus imputed to them as much as you do; and, in this case, I don't think you a proper judge of their intentions. If I were before an impartial judge, I should be allowed an independent jury to decide whether I signed the protest under the influence of the sentiments you have expressed. In signing it we did no more than declare our decided conviction that our brethren were unjustly and illegally expelled.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Are you willing to publish a contradiction of the words in the paper?

Mr. BENNION.—If you will draw up your definition of them I will then tell you.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Thorpe is the next.

Mr. THORPE.—I signed my name to that protest, Sir, but the sentiments you have uttered were as far from my mind when I did so as possible.

Mr. MARSDEN.—But you see there is that meaning in the words. Will you publish to the world your disavowal of them as widely as they have been circulated?

Mr. THORPE.—What benefit should we derive from doing so, as it regards our connexion with the Association?

Mr. MARSDEN.—We will not say any thing about that now.

Mr. THORPE.—I denounce the sentiments you have expressed, and am willing to publish to ten thousand worlds my disavowal of them; and whether you expel me from society or not I shall publish to the world that they are not *my* sentiments. I do not think any pious man, with a mind free from prejudice, would interpret the protest, and draw such conclusions from the words as you have done,—words intended only to convey the sanguine expression of our feelings for our injured and suffering brethren. It is now nearly twenty years since I joined the Methodist society; and I joined it, Sir, not with a conscience burdened with a load of guilt, but with a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ,—not under conviction for sin, and desirous of church fellowship on any terms, but under a firm persuasion that Methodism was of God, its doctrines scriptural, and its salutary discipline calculated to preserve peace and good order, if properly applied. This conviction was not a whit abated when, at Leeds, in 1823, you, Sir, appointed me to the office of a class-leader. I well remember the emotions excited in my breast when you visited my humble dwelling and requested me to take the charge of a class, and I also remember the remarks I made to you on that occasion. Having, by experience, proved the necessity of unremitting vigilance and watchfulness, I said I found the difficulty of watching over my own soul quite sufficient, without having to take the oversight of others; and when, in the order of Providence, I had to leave that loving people, their kind sympathies and affectionate regards evidenced that, however imperfect my endeavours to profit them had been, they were not unmindful of my labours of love; and, Sir, I now find myself alike circumstanced, as it regards the members of my class, towards whom I cannot but have some kindred feeling. [Here Mr. Thorpe entered into some details not very material to the general argument, and which our limits prevent us from inserting.] For some few years past I have observed practices which I cannot consider otherwise than misrule. I allude chiefly to the removing of stewards and leaders from office contrary to the wishes of a majority of a

leaders' meeting, the not allowing free discussion at quarterly meetings, nor permitting the opinions of the majority to have any influence in Conference. I joined the Association, not only from my own conviction that Methodist law was misapplied, but also from that of others whom I considered better and wiser than myself. I do not blame the brethren who have retraced their steps, but I cannot follow their example. Were I now to withdraw I should consider it a sacrifice of principle. I would, for a moment, refer to a proposition made to this meeting before any of its members were expelled. We then requested that we might be allowed to continue our labours exclusively with you, Sir, but that while we withdrew all our influence and energies from the Association our names might still remain; and I think Methodism would not have suffered had this request been granted. It appears there is now no alternative; and though I deprecate expulsion only less than the loss of a good conscience, yet, Sir, I shall for the present submit to your decision. [After some further remarks Mr. Thorpe concluded by expressing a hope that Conference will have the prudence to adopt such measures as may be best calculated to allay dissension; and restore to the Connexion the nominally expelled.]

Mr. Marsden then addressed himself to brother Day.

Mr. DAY.—I don't think any of the brethren understood the words in the sense you have given to them. I never did.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Are you willing to publish your disavowal of them?

Mr. DAY.—Yes; and I think none of the brethren will object to do so.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Story?

Mr. STORY.—I am astonished how any person could put such a construction upon them; I never so understood the words, neither would I allow any one to meet in my class who could, for a moment, entertain such sentiments. I know that what I might be able to say in my defence would be of no avail, therefore I decline saying any thing.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Will you publicly disavow the expression?

Mr. STORY.—What I have done I did conscientiously, and I will abide by the consequences.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Lindsay?

Mr. LINDSAY.—This is very unlike the practice of our Divine Master. He did not take advantage of the ignorance or infirmities of his creatures, nor force a meaning from words which they were never intended to convey. He always judged righteous judgment. If the preachers, leaders, and members had been labouring to save souls, these things had not befallen us.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Are you willing to retract these words?

Mr. LINDSAY.—Yes; I deny the meaning which you give them.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Martin?

Mr. MARTIN.—I read the letter sent to you, Sir, and I did not perceive any thing wrong in it; the cause arose out of circumstances. The brethren being illegally expelled, I joined in protesting against their expulsion, and I do not believe that the words were intended to be understood as expressing any other meaning than that the conduct of our brethren had not been immoral. I read the *Illuminator* to-day, Sir, and I perceive that the views of the editor correspond with yours; nay, the very expressions are so like what you have used that one might suppose you were the author, or at least that you had read them attentively. I can also say, with brother Thorpe, that I am no agitator, and appeal to my brethren; they never knew me to stir up strife either at a leaders' or quarterly meeting. I have endeavoured to follow the leadings of Providence, and leave events to God, for I know that my salvation does not depend upon man.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Brother Martin has referred to the *Illuminator*; I am not the writer of the article alluded to, nor do I know who wrote it, but the author appears to have taken the same view of the subject, which is a proof to me that my sentiments are correct.

Mr. GARDINER.—It has been said that "prevention is better than cure;" and had you, Sir, seen the brethren, and reasoned with them in the first instance, I am persuaded the letter would never have appeared in the public prints; for you see none of the brethren hold those opinions ascribed to them by the forced construction put upon the words.

Mr. MARSDEN.—Two of the brethren appear willing to publish a disavowal of the words in the letter, and brother Day and brother Lindsay can send me a note to that effect by to-morrow night; for it is evident that no person can be a leader in our society who holds such opinions: they may be private members, but they



cannot be leaders. [Mr. M. added something about the improper conduct of the Association, and the extreme forbearance of the preachers.]

Mr. TORBET.—That may be your opinion, Sir, and you have a right to enjoy it; quite the contrary, however, is the opinion of the members of the Association. They, no doubt, consider themselves engaged in the cause of God. Then, turning to Mr. Marsden, he said,—I cannot, Sir, for a moment suppose that you are anxious to seize an opportunity to expel these brethren; it is difficult to imagine that you can have any particular wish to get rid of them as individuals, especially when considered in connexion with their classes; for, judging from what has transpired in reference to the brethren already removed, we may rationally infer, that if these brethren be expelled, their classes, with very few exceptions, will go with them, and this, I am sure, would be rather a serious matter to our society. In order to prevent such an occurrence, as these brethren unanimously disavow the sentiments attempted to be drawn from the expression alluded to, I think something should be done, in order to reconcile this difference of opinion, before we leave this meeting; I beg, therefore, to submit the following declaration, which I have hastily written:—"We, the undersigned, having subscribed our names to a printed document, in which the term 'gross immorality' is used, do declare that it was not intended to be understood in the extensive application stated by a writer in the last number of the *Illuminator*, but in its commonly received acceptation."

Mr. MARSDEN.—That is not sufficient, Brother Torbet. The words, if allowed to stand, would alter our rules, therefore the brethren should voluntarily draw up a statement of their own, and send it to me. Could you not, Brother Day, and Brother Lindsay, send it or bring it to me by to-morrow night?

Mr. JOHN HUGHES.—In disavowing the sentiments there should be some mention made of rules; and how the rules are affected by the words in the letter.

Mr. TORBET.—The last number of the *Illuminator* will throw light upon it; the rules are there referred to.

Mr. MARSDEN.—The publishing a denial of those opinions alone is not sufficient; the brethren must also leave the Association. They need not make it known to the world when they quit the Association, but they must publish a disavowal of the sentiments contained in the letter.

Mr. MARSDEN then desired Mr. Stamp to pray, when Brother Thorpe begged to be allowed to ask in what position he stood in that meeting?

Mr. MARSDEN.—You cannot be allowed to remain as a leader, but you may remain as a private member.

Mr. THORPE.—I do not intend to dispute your will and pleasure, Sir, but I have seen no steps taken to remove me from my office of leader.

Mr. MARSDEN.—That was done some weeks ago, according to rule, by the majority of this leaders' meeting; and, if there were any doubt before of the validity of our rules, that doubt is now fully removed, *as our rules are now sanctioned by the highest Court in the land!* It is not *my* WILL, but the rules of the SOCIETY that I act upon.\*

Mr. THORPE.—You asked that meeting if a certain law, which you read, had been broken? You did not say it could remove from office or from membership, and you know there was nothing like a majority that acknowledged it had been broken. Besides, the rule in the class-book is of later date than that referred to by you, and if you are going to remove me from office, I must again refer to my class-book.

Mr. MARSDEN said, there was not time to argue the point then,—it had been argued before, and if Brother Thorpe pressed the subject, he would say that the law of 1796 was still in force, and by it he might be expelled from society. He then called upon Mr. Stamp to pray.

\* Mr. George Marsden is mistaken. He ought to have known, as every one knows who has taken the trouble to read an authentic (not the *Watchman's*) report of the case *Warren v. Burton*, that the question as to the validity of rules respecting the admission and expulsion of leaders and private members was never mooted either before the Vice-Chancellor or the Lord Chancellor. A slight knowledge of the laws of his country might have taught Mr. Marsden, that judges never travel out of their way to give *extra-judicial* opinions. The House of Lords, not the Court of Chancery, (as erroneously stated by Mr. M.) is the highest court in the kingdom. Does Mr. Marsden know who, next to the king, is the chief magistrate? Mr. Newton, in the course of an old sermon, delivered in his best style, at Brunswick Chapel, Sunday se'nnight, said, "There were things existing in the Connexion which he, like others, did not like;" and Mr. Marsden says "it is not *his* will, but the rules of the society (*preachers?*) that he acts upon." They will soon have an opportunity of proving their sincerity, by voting for a revision of the rules, laws, and regulations.—*Edit.*

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Upon perusing the valuable letter of Mr. Gordon in the last number of your *Lantern*, my mind was forcibly struck with the additional strength which is given to his arguments from the early history of the Church, and I beg leave, for the benefit of your readers, to transmit to you the following extracts from Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*. I shall be glad if those advocates of despotism, the editors of the *Illuminator*, will either admit the force of the quotations in support of the people having a voice in the government of the Church, or that they will prove Dr. Mosheim not to be an accredited historian, and that the statements he gives are totally without authority, and contrary to fact.—Yours, &c. A FRIEND.

1st Century.—Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, 1st volume, chapter 2nd, part 2nd, 5th paragraph.

"Neither Christ himself, nor his holy apostles, have commanded any thing clearly or expressly concerning the external form of the Church, and the precise method according to which it should be governed. From this we may infer that the regulation of this was in some measure to be accommodated to the time, and left to the wisdom and prudence of the chief rulers, both of the State and of the Church. It is, however, it is true that the apostles acted by divine inspiration, and in conformity with the commands of their Blessed Master, (and this no Christian can call in question,) then it follows that that form of government which the primitive churches borrowed from that of Jerusalem, the first Christian assembly established by the apostles themselves, must be esteemed as of divine institution. But from this it would be wrong to conclude that such a form is immutable, and ought to be invariably observed, for this a great variety of events may render impossible. In those early times every Christian church consisted of the people, their leaders, and the ministers or deacons, and these, indeed, belong essentially to every religious society. The people were undoubtedly the first in authority, for the apostles showed, by their own example, that nothing of moment was to be carried on, or determined, without the consent of the assembly, and such a method was both prudent and necessary in those critical times."—Acts i, 15; vi. 3; xv. 4; xxi. 22.

4th.—"It was, therefore, the assembly of the people which chose their own rulers and teachers, or received them by a free and authoritative consent when recommended by others. The same people rejected, or confirmed by their suffrages, the laws that were proposed by their rulers to the assembly; excommunicated profligate and unworthy members of the Church; restored the penitent to their forfeited privileges; passed judgment on the different subjects of controversy and dissention that arose in their community; examined and decided the disputes which happened between the elders and deacons; and, in a word, exercised all that authority which belongs to such as are invested with the sovereign power. The people had, indeed, in some measure purchased these privileges by administering to the support of their rulers, ministers, and poor, and by offering large and generous contributions when the safety, or interests of the community rendered them necessary."

2d Century.—The next extract is from 1st volume, chapter 2d, part 2d, in the *History of the second Century*.

2d. "During the greater part of this century the Christian churches were independent of each other, nor were they joined together by association, confederacy, or any other bonds but those of charity. Each Christian assembly was a little state, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved, by the society. But in process of time all the Christian churches of a province were formed into one large ecclesiastical body, which, like confederate states, assembled at certain times, in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole. This institution had its origin among the Greeks, with whom nothing was more common than this confederacy of independent states, and the regular assemblies which met in consequence thereof at fixed times, and were composed of the deputies of each respective state. But these ecclesiastical associations were not long confined to the Greeks; their great utility was no sooner perceived than they became universal, and were formed in all places where the gospel had been planted. To these assemblies, in which the deputies or commissioners

of several churches consulted together, the name of *synods* was appropriated by the Greeks, and that of *councils* by the Latins, and the laws that were enacted in these general meetings were called *canons*, that is, *RULES*.

3d. These Councils, of which we find not the smallest trace before the middle of this century, changed the whole face of the church and gave it a new form; "for by them the ancient privileges of the people were considerably diminished, and the power and authority of the bishops greatly augmented. The humility, indeed, and prudence of these pious prelates prevented their assuming all at once the power and authority with which they were afterwards invested. At their first appearance in these general councils, they acknowledged that they were no more than the delegates of their respective churches, and that they acted in the name and by the appointment of their people. But they soon changed their humble tone, imperceptibly extended the limits of their authority, turned their influence into dominion and their councils into laws, and openly asserted at length that Christ had empowered them to prescribe to his people authoritative rules of faith and manners."

Let the Methodists read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest this important record in ecclesiastical history, for if the church founded by the apostles, through the assumption of a priestly prerogative to govern, finally degenerated into all the evils of Popery, what may become of the followers of John Wesley if they subject themselves to a similar authority?

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### MISSTATEMENTS OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

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#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In the *Illuminator*, page 53, is the following statement:—"The most recent trial of this union of the secular and pastoral character in the government of the church, has been made by the Methodist New Connexion; but, as a Methodist Connexion, our impression is, it has not answered the expectation of its founders and friends," &c.

The salvo employed by this candid writer is seasonably placed at the head of his opinion:—"Not belonging to the age when this Connexion was formed from the old stock," &c.

Here it is obvious that he cannot be a competent judge of the expectation of the founders and friends of the Connexion, and as he adduces no evidence of what they expected, his juvenile opinion has little weight. But his comparative youth will not screen him from blame for the incorrect statements which follow in his account of the two Connexions. Contrasting their commencement, he says, "After existing nearly 40 years,—having several preachers, about 5000 members, and numerous chapels to begin with." Numerous chapels; that is, many in opposition to a few; whereas it should have been stated, a few in opposition to many; say about a dozen, several of them held by uncertain tenure, and of which we were soon deprived. Then the writer goes back to the commencement of Wesleyan Methodism, and states, "With nothing to begin with, no chapels, no coadjutors, no members of society, &c., the two Wesleys laid the foundations of the societies, and with the assistance of the few labourers who came to their aid, increased from 1744, the period when the first Minutes were published, to 1782, (38 years,) to 46,331, whilst the New Connexion in 38 years amounts to about 15,000. Our only intention is to show the members of our own body and the Association, that the New Connexion has not come up to our notions of progress and growth." I observe,

1. This is by no means the first instance in which the Wesleyans have endeavoured to show off at our expense, while we, in full confidence of the goodness of our system, have suffered it to pass in silence. But this statement is so far from being correct, as to demand a confutation, to prevent imposition from being successfully practised either upon their members or the Association.

The writer of this desultory page in the *Illuminator*—desultory either by inadvertency or design,—states the fact that an argument has been set up, founded on the principle of geometrical progression, to show that the New Connexion has augmented its numbers more rapidly than the old. This fact he does not attempt to disprove;—but this tacit acknowledgment that we have excelled them, by no means answering his purpose, he proposes another rule, and instead of fixing on

ten years past to the present time, he says "It strikes us that the fair way of comparison would be to take the period when the Old Connexion numbered 5000 members—follow its progress forty years at the end; take the total, and compare it with the progress made by the New Connexion, it will then be found, by this mode of admeasurement, that the old system operated with much greater vigour and effect on the masses of the people than the new."

2. Now, if this gentleman will take all the circumstances attendant on this case fairly into account, and make out as clear a statement as the writer to whom he courteously alludes has done in our favour, I will bow to the decision. Lest he should overlook some of the circumstances, I shall point out a few, as a specimen, to lead him to a train of thought for the attainment of the object, namely, the information of their own members and the Association.

1. The order of time when Mr. Wesley first formed a Methodist Society—say in 1739, instead of 1744.

2. The number of churches in which he preached in town and country, compared with the number of chapels which we possessed when we set out as a people.

3. The novelty, in the estimation of the multitude, of the doctrine he preached; and the consequent degree of public attention which that doctrine awakened, as well as the strangeness of a clergyman preaching in the open air, &c.

4. The number of evangelical clergymen who assisted him, six of whom sat in conference with him and his preachers at one time.

5. Do not forget Mr. Whitfield, a more powerful preacher than either of the Wesleys, &c.

6. Mr. Wesley had the whole length and breadth of the land before him, unoccupied by any similar society, either to counteract his efforts or to divide the spoil taken from the common enemy.

I should be happy to see this comparison clearly made out; and if the writer will illuminate me with a clear and candid statement at as early a period as convenient, he will much oblige—Yours, &c.

WILLIAM HASLAM.

Sheffield, March 31, 1835.

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Manchester.*—Preparations have been made in Manchester for the meeting of the delegates on a very extensive scale. A wooden building or tabernacle has been erected calculated to contain not fewer than three thousand individuals. This will, in the first instance, be used for the proposed public meetings, &c., and afterwards occupied as a place of worship for the First Manchester Circuit, for which purpose it was opened on Sunday last by the Rev. Dr. Warren. The quarterly visitation of the classes in this circuit is just over, and the results are most gratifying,—the members having attended more punctually than usual, and the amount received far exceeding any thing previously known in that circuit. Mr. Wilkinson, well known as the conductor of the orchestra at Oldham-street Chapel, has sent in his resignation in that capacity, and has tendered his services to conduct the singing at the tabernacle gratuitously.

*Bury.*—A most respectable meeting was held in the Methodist New Connexion Chapel, on Friday se'nnight, for the purpose of explaining the principles and objects of the Wesleyan Methodist Reform Association. Mr. Livesey, of Bury, who has been fifty years a member,

forty years a local preacher, and a trustee for every chapel in the circuit, opened the meeting by singing and prayer. Mr. Hesketh, of Manchester, was in the chair. The meeting was addressed by the following gentlemen in succession:—Mr. Greenhalgh, Mr. Taylor, and Dr. Warren, from Manchester; Mr. D. Rowland, from Liverpool; and Mr. Wolstenholme, the superintendent of the Protestant Methodists in Manchester. The deepest attention was evinced by a crowded audience, during a meeting of from three to four hours' duration. At the close the following resolution was moved by Mr. Rowland, seconded by Mr. Kay, and carried unanimously,—“That this meeting cordially approves of the objects of the Wesleyan Methodist Reform Association, and solemnly pledges itself to a zealous co-operation.”

*Warrington.*—Notwithstanding the impediments thrown in the way by the preachers and their partisans, a public meeting of the friends of the Association was held in the Independent Methodist chapel, on Thursday last. It had been previously arranged to hold it in the Circus, and afterwards in the large Assembly-room, but both these arrangements were defeated by the im-



proper interference and gross misrepresentations of the preachers' party. The chapel was crowded to excess, not fewer than about 800 persons being present. J. Roylance, Esq., of Warrington, in the chair. The business of the meeting commenced with singing and prayer. Captain Barlow and Messrs. Grindrod and Greenhalgh, from Manchester; Messrs. Wallace and Thompson, from Northwich; and Messrs. Farrer, Barnes, and Ledger, from Liverpool, severally addressed the meeting at considerable length. The proceedings were interrupted at the commencement by the superintendent, Mr. Jackson, who appeared greatly excited; Mr. Straw, the other travelling preacher, also frequently interrupted the speakers, but displayed greater command of temper, and conducted his opposition with decorum. Finding that the deputation were not to be put down by noise and clamour, silence was at length restored, and the speakers proceeded without further interruption. Various reports injurious to the members of the Association having been industriously propagated, Mr. Jackson was pointedly asked if he had used certain offensive expressions, particularly at the last quarterly meeting, to which he replied in the negative. It ought to be generally known, that the preachers have long been in the habit of speaking of expelled members as "bad men." It was stated by a gentleman, at a late public meeting of the Association, that, in the year 1827, pending the celebrated Leeds affair, he had frequent conversations with the Rev. John Scott on the subject, who always spoke of the expelled at Leeds, as "bad men;" and, on one occasion, he said to him,—"It seems very odd to me, Mr. Scott, that one thousand 'bad men' should have been admitted into that society." It happened, in the course of business, not long afterwards, that he became personally acquainted with several of the parties so described, and was agreeably surprised to find Mr. Scott's slanderous imputation entirely false. Thus it is at the present day. But to return.—The preachers, like the *Watchman* and the *Illuminator*, were unable to make any reply to the often-repeated question,—"Why were not the Articles of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797, regularly entered in the Conference journals, and signed by the President and Secretary, in order to make them legally binding on the Connexion?" Mr. Jackson was asked if he would guarantee freedom of speech at the Missionary meeting on the following day, and the deputation would re-

main in town to meet him? This proposition was declined, and the reverend gentleman withdrew. If, in the early stage of the discussion, prejudice, (thus artfully excited,) existed where it is most to be lamented, such feeling ceased to exist before its termination, and it was evident that the *ladies*, as in other towns, were decidedly in favour of the Association. The meeting lasted upwards of four hours, and a handsome collection was made. The following resolutions were passed unanimously:—That this meeting approve of the principles of the Manchester and Liverpool Wesleyan Reform Association, and pledge themselves to establish a Branch Association in Warrington.—That the cordial thanks of this meeting be given to the Minister and Trustees for their kindness in granting the friends of the Association the use of the chapel.—That the hearty thanks of this meeting be given to John Roylance, Esq., for his firm, able, and impartial conduct in the chair.

*Hull*.—George Cookman, Esq., and Mr. William Sissison, have been appointed as delegates by the Hull Wesleyan-Methodist Association, for the purpose of attending the proposed meeting of deputies, to be held in Manchester, on the 20th of this month, for the restoration of their rights as members, and otherwise to endeavour to effect a reform in Methodism. From Mr. Cookman's known talents and knowledge of Methodistic law, we have no doubt that he will be a very valuable auxiliary to the meeting.—*Hull Advertiser*.

*Nantwich*.—A public meeting was held in the Independent chapel, yesterday se'nnight, and every part was crowded. Mr. R. Horton, of Nantwich, in the chair. Dr. Warren and Mr. Hughes from Manchester; Messrs. Wallace and Thompson, from Northwich; and Messrs. Farrer and Barnes, from Liverpool, attended and addressed the meeting. The committee afterwards met the deputation, and entered into resolutions to establish branch associations throughout the circuit.

*Northwich*.—A similar meeting to the above was held at this place, on Monday se'nnight; and at

*Hanley*, (the Potteries, Staffordshire,) this day week, attended with equal success.

*Leeds*.—The following important resolutions will be highly gratifying to our readers, as showing the immense accession of strength about to be added to the Association. From the activity and zeal of thousands of the Leeds Protestant Methodists, intimately acquainted with every part of Yorkshire, the cause

of the people will derive incalculable advantages. At a meeting of the Connexion Committee of the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists, held at Leeds on the 9th instant, Mr. James Sigston, in the chair, two letters from the Central Committee of the Wesleyan Association having been previously received, requesting the co-operation of the respective circuits in their Connexion, as auxiliary branches of that body, the contents of which letters had been communicated to the circuits by that committee, and the replies from the principal part of them having been received and read, it was then resolved,—

1. That, as the avowed and ultimate objects of the Wesleyan Association are the redress of past grievances in the Conference Connexion, and the attainment of such a reform in its constitution as it is hoped, will place the government of its societies on a scriptural basis, and be calculated to promote future peace and prosperity, it therefore demands the confidence and support of every lover of genuine Methodism.

2. That, in the opinion of this meeting, the circumstance of the complaints of the Wesleyan Association being specially founded upon the crying injustice done to the brethren who were driven from the Old Connexion at Leeds, by the illegal acts of the ever-memorable special district meeting, is a full justification of the call which is now made upon the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists, and a sufficient reason for their rendering any services in their power in furtherance of the designs of the Association.

3. That this meeting, feeling it a duty to express its deep sympathy with their brethren who are now suffering, as they themselves have previously done, from the effects of an overgrown and irresponsible authority, claimed and exercised by the Conference preachers, in defiance of the solemn injunctions of the great Head of the church, in opposition to the practice of the primitive times, and to the manifest injury of the ministerial character and office, most cheerfully responds to the call of the Association, and gladly unites with them in behalf of the Wesleyan Protestant Connexion, in their endeavours to remove the appalling evils which now exist in the Conference Connexion.

4. That it is the opinion of this meeting, founded on the communications received from our circuits, that the introduction of lay representatives into Conference, and the concession of a legitimate and proper authority to the local meetings, according to the principles of the New Testament and the practice of the primitive churches, can ALONE produce permanent peace in the Conference Connexion.

5. That this meeting recommends the immediate formation of Branch Associations, in all the circuits throughout our Connexion.

JAMES SIGSTON, Chairman.

*Glasgow.*—The following is abridged from the *Glasgow Liberator*:—Sir,—Some few weeks ago, an excellent address to “The Wesleyan Methodists of Glasgow,” was issued, stating in modest, but firm and suitable language, the grievances under which the society laboured, the dreadful hardships of the burdened trustees, the want of lay representation in the annual Conference, the despotic power of the superintendents as chairmen at their meetings, and other crying evils, which I have not room to enumerate. It is a pious, eloquent, affectionate, and enlightened document; and concludes by calling upon all the members who approve of the object, to unite with them in this appeal for reformation, entitled “The Glasgow Wesleyan Methodist Reform Association.”

It has been published, I think, in several of the newspapers of this city, and no doubt approved of by every true friend of Christian freedom. However, it seems, the Wesleyan preachers of Glasgow have waxed wroth against it. The superintendent sent the following notice to an excellent man, esteemed for his piety, good conduct, and general knowledge on all important subjects:—

*To Mr. Robert Urie.*

DEAR BROTHER,—There having been put into circulation, in this town and neighbourhood, a printed document, bearing your name, the object of which we conceive is to *agitate the Methodist Society, and to subvert Methodism*, you are hereby requested to attend the next leaders’ meeting in John-street Vestry, to be held on Thursday next, the 12th instant, to meet the above statement.—I am, yours, affectionately,

(Signed) WM. CONSTABLE.

On Saturday I received the following letter from Mr. Urie, which shows that the preachers and the leaders have not made a dead letter of Mr. Constable’s note. They will live to regret what they have done, or I greatly mistake the rights of Britons and Christians.

*Cadogan-street, Blythswood Holme.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I had the honour last night to receive the sentence which I had anticipated, viz., expulsion at the leaders’ meeting. Two charges were preferred against me, said to arise out of the recent address. 1st. Agitating the Society. 2d. Subverting Methodism. After some skirmishing, and desultory conversation, I was told that if I would withdraw from the Association the right hand of fellowship would still be held out to me; but I distinctly told them that I had made up my mind, had counted the cost, and had nailed the colours to the mast, and, therefore, begged to decline accepting *their kind proposal*. A jesuitical clap-trap motion, founded upon an admission I made in the course of the evening, to a *question* or a *demand* put to me

either by Mr. M'Owen or Mr. West, was put and seconded, that this meeting accept of Brother Urie's resignation; and thus it was made to appear, and industriously circulated by the thick-and-thin supporters of the priests, that I expelled myself from the Methodist Connexion. However, I wish them much joy of their jesuitical trick; for once they have been made to appear successful. Alas! alas! for Methodism. It is waning, it is falling, and the glory is departing. What do you think of such men that could shield themselves from odium by such a *mean and paltry* subterfuge? I do hope that I may calculate upon the aid of your powerful pen, when you find it convenient. With reference to the above case, I know you have some influence with the public press, and really the Methodist preachers in Glasgow deserve a severe castigation. However, my dear Sir, I bow to your superior judgment, and remain, very affectionately, yours,

(Signed)

ROBERT URIE.

I leave the public to judge of the despotic nature of the Wesleyan Society. The preachers are playing a desperate game, and both parties will assuredly find that truth and Christian freedom will be too strong for their ruthless despotism. It is the more *galling and disgusting* to see the Methodist priests acting in this lordly manner, when it is a well-known fact that more than one-half of those high personages, now styled "The Rev. Mr. so and so," were, a few years ago, tailors, cobblers, weavers, masons, hatters,\* &c. &c., and who are now more comfortably supported by the voluntary bounty of those private members, whose rights they seem so keen to trample on, and whose kindness they are too apt to forget.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

ARGUS.

Glasgow, 18th March, 1835.

\* I mean no uncharitable reflections on these honourable and industrious professions, but am showing the truth of the common saying, "Parsons forget when they were clerks."

A well-informed correspondent in the North of England writes:—"That you will annihilate the ruling faction, there can, I think, be no doubt. The decisions upon Dr. Warren's case will push the matter on: the public are affected more in the *right* way by it than I supposed they would be. I am not satisfied with the Manchester Association. More resolution is wanted. I would hope, that, as Chancery has extinguished the idle hopes of the Articles of Pacification being acted upon as law, the Association will demand something explicit. If Wesleyan Methodism was once based upon New Connexion principles, it would rise out of its difficulties, and fill the earth very soon. But what a strange

fact has Samuel Warren brought to light:—*the Plan of Pacification never was the act of the Conference—was never entered and subscribed as such!* Does not this neutralize all the Trust Deeds which have been made upon the credit of these Articles? Methodism will soon be at the disposal of the Reformers. To them it belongs to reform or destroy it. If they will but introduce lay delegates into the District Meetings and Conference, they will save it; if not, they will *end it*. Newcastle is uneasy. The immortal Robert Newton was there a few weeks since. A social breakfast was held, and he pathetically described the PERSECUTIONS HE HAD SUFFERED ON DR. WARREN'S ACCOUNT! All the preachers in the neighbourhood were invited, except James Everett. He was allowed *no* coffee. A friend inquired the reason. Everett replied, 'that he had opposed the manufactory for preachers.' Associations are formed in the Newcastle East Circuit: also at Shields, and I hear at Gateshead. Some of the preachers talk of *crushing* them. But whether fearful of being squeezed themselves, or owing to some other cause, I do not know, but to the present they have kept their hands to themselves. Things are very promising. In a year or two, changes will have taken place that will make the religious world appear in a new aspect."—*Christian Advocate*.

*Jamaica*.—It appears from the following narrative, which we copy from the *Jamaica Watchman* of February 14, that the spirit of Wesleyan-Methodist reform has begun to manifest itself in that distant part of the Connexion:—"On Wednesday, the 4th, a religious service, numerous and respectably attended, was held in the town of Falmouth, for the public recognition of the Rev. T. E. Ward as minister of the Independent Wesleyan Methodist Society, recently formed, and constituted on the following principles, namely,—That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule, and the sufficient rule, of a Christian's faith and practice; that when a church or a society of Christians, voluntarily contributes towards the support and maintenance of its ministers, *it has an inherent right and power of choosing its own pastors and other church officers, and of rejecting, upon just grounds, such persons as, without its consent, may be sent to it.* And that the pastor of this Society, under the great Head of the church, and on those principles laid down in the New Testament, is fully and incontrovertibly entitled to exercise

all the functions and powers of church government, with which all other Christian pastors are invested.—The service being commenced by singing, an introductory address was delivered by Mr. Ward. The Rev. W. Dendy read the third and fourth chapters of St. Paul's first Epistle to Timothy, and prayed for the Divine blessing to descend on the special and important occasion. The Rev. W. Knibb delivered a luminous, eloquent, and affecting charge, founded on 1st Timothy, iii, 1. And the Rev. B. B. Dexter preached an excellent and impressive discourse from 1st Thess. v. 12, 13. We pray that the Almighty God may crown this important undertaking with his continued blessing, for his

name's sake."—We heartily respond to the prayer of our liberal contemporary.

*Birmingham.*—A most interesting public meeting was held in Birmingham on Thursday last, at which Dr. Warren and Mr. Wolstenholme, from Manchester; Mr. John Gordon, from Dudley; Messrs. Rowland and Beynon, from Liverpool; and several other deputations attended. Particulars in our next.

Let our opponents contemplate these "SAVINGS AND DOINGS," and the success which has crowned the efforts of the Association during the past week, and then

"To supper with what appetite they may."

### THE REV. DR. STEWART ON THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH.

Dr. Stewart, of this town, is well known and universally respected; and, perhaps, there is not a more popular speaker on the platform at missionary meetings, all of which he attends, without regard to what particular sect they belong. In the year 1828 he published a Sermon on the Duties of the Elders of the Church, from which we extract the following. It would appear that, although the Doctor supports the Conference party in their missionary meetings, he is directly at variance with them on the subject of Church discipline. He shows that the church declines, as the people lose their rights.

"In the assemblies of the church, ruling elders have a right to reason and vote in all matters coming before them, even as ministers have. The duties, therefore, which devolve on this important order of men, you will perceive, are of two kinds. The one relates to the more public deliberations and decisions of the church, and the other to the more private, but not less powerful, influence which they possess, in directing the religious concerns of a congregation. Ruling elders are recognised in all ecclesiastical courts as the *representatives of the people*, and, equally with the teaching elders, possess a *right to give their opinion* in all matters regarding the spiritual management of the church;—a right this, which is of vast importance, for by means of it an effectual provision is made for supporting the *rights of the people* in these assemblies, and for controlling every attempt on the part of the priesthood at that spiritual lordship and usurpation which have always been found hurtful in suppressing popular zeal and genuine piety."—Page 17.

"If we would wish to see what an effective eldership can accomplish, even in England, where we have often been told Presbytery is an exotic plant, let us look to the leaders among the Methodist body, men who are virtually and efficiently a Presbyterian eldership, and they will tell us by deeds what ruling elders have it in their power to do. The mighty efforts of that increasing and enterprising body of Christians owe their success, in no small degree, to their zealous leaders, and their vigorous Presbyterian combination. We have dropped the life-giving power of our church management, and that religious denomination have taken it up. We keep the name, and they display the efficacy of the system, and extend, by this means, their celebrated achievements over every land. This body of Christians have adopted the whole skeleton of Presbyterianism, with some additional fillings up of their own. Their leaders are Presbyterian elders; their leaders' meeting, the session; their class, the particular division of the people placed under the elder; their district meetings, Presbyteries; their Conference, the synod or assembly; and their superintendents, moderators, or Presbyteries. Presbytery ceased to exist in its operation among those who call themselves Presbyterians, in this part of the United Kingdom, before any of those evils took place, for which it is most unjustly desecrated. To the desuetude, therefore, into which this branch of our spiritual constitution has fallen in many places, I am disposed to think we may clearly trace the great proportion of those evils which are inscribing *Ichabod* on many fair districts of the Presbyterian Church."—P. 26.



This day is published, price Two Shillings,

The FIRST VOLUME of the WATCHMAN'S LANTERN, containing the First Twelve Numbers, (being all that are published up to the present time,) with "An Affectionate Address," "Constitution of Methodism," and "Great Public Meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, at the Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool."

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The frantic ravings of our *calumniating* contemporary continue to be sufficiently amusing. We cannot help thinking, however, that though they may cause the ignorant to laugh, they cannot but make the judicious grieve. The line,

"When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be,"

has been affixed as a motto to his last lucubrations, we suppose for the purpose of enabling him to offer a practical comment on the next line,

"When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he."

During the time when Dr. Warren's cause was yet *sub judice*, we were favoured in the 6th number with a lengthy paper deprecatory of the stopping of the supplies, written in a tone lugubrious enough to have melted the heart of an oyster; but no sooner does he imagine the present difficulties of the Conference to be staved off by the Chancellor's decision than, like any other fool, he throws up his cap and jingles his bells with the most self-satisfied complacency. The rant and fustian in which our contemporary indulges, occasionally set at defiance all attempts at intelligibility. Take the following specimen. In the last *Illuminator* we are accused of "spending our time and squandering the twopences of our admirers like mice!" We were not previously aware that squandering money was one of the characteristics of the *mus* species; but perhaps the intercourse of this editor with some of the *rats* of the Conference, who once advocated liberal principles, but have since forsaken them, has qualified him to speak on the subject. He likewise communicates the astounding intelligence that "certain slanderous allegations" of ours are "men of straw;" and that these "men of straw" we have "most ungenerously filiated upon the late Dr. A. Clarke!!!" Bad as the *Illuminator* would make us, we are scarcely guilty of this enormity. The Doctor need not have "men of straw" filiated on him, the sons he has left behind being not "men of straw," but gentlemen of honour and respectability, who, we have good reason to know, highly disapprove both of the jesuitical and cruel usage of their revered parent by the Conference, and of its arbitrary constitution and proceedings. Cannot some kind friend be found to teach the poor editor the rudiments of grammar, or, at least, to prevent him from thus publicly murdering the "King's English" fortnight after fortnight, in this ludicrous manner?

We recommend *A Plain Man* to refer his friend to the second part of the "Catechism for Wesleyan Methodists," in which he will find the subject alluded to handled in an able manner. We are sorry for the resolution come to by Mr. Jos. Carne, of Truro; but his request shall nevertheless be attended to.

We feel obliged to X. Z. for his offer, but will be glad if he will wait a little previous to commencing his task.

Our friend of the *Illuminator* has grown very pugnacious of late. He exclaims most melodramatically, "We have thrown down the glove, and dared them to the combat. If they meet us like men, we will respect them," &c. The respect of a person of such mildness and candour being very desirable, we hereby offer to gratify his taste for controversy. If he will *illuminate* the world with an essay, in his own peculiar style of Billingsgate, on the following subject, we will undertake a reply:—"Ought the members composing a Christian church to take any part, either by themselves or their representatives, in the government of the church, and if not, why not?"

We regret exceedingly that we could not make room for the very long account of Mr. Rosevear's expulsion, which we received a few days since; and we fear the interesting proceedings of the delegates at Manchester, the great Birmingham meeting, and other important affairs of more pressing and immediate interest, which of course demand priority of attention, will prevent the possibility of our complying with the wishes of our friends in Cornwall.

Mr. Liddel will perceive that we have adopted his plan.

The verses from *L. S.* are not quite suitable for our publication.

We also acknowledge *Onesimus—An Old Methodist—Lex non Scripta—and Anon.*

Mr. Russell's reply to E. Jones's letter, in the *Illuminator*, shall appear in our next.

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# WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

THE  
INTENDED  
TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

**No. 14.**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1835.**

**Price 2d.**

## PROVISIONAL MEETING OF DELEGATES, AT MANCHESTER.

We proceed to give our readers some account of the late transactions at Manchester, in connexion with the general meeting of delegates held there in Easter week.

The Central Committee of the Association conceiving that the cause of Methodistical Reform had ramified itself through the country to a considerable extent, and judging it expedient to convene the friends from the various circuits which had taken up the cause, had, by public advertisement, previously announced that a preliminary meeting of delegates would be held in Manchester, in the approaching Easter week.

The propriety and importance of such a meeting will be obvious to all. The object proposed by the Committee was to ascertain the sentiments of the Connexion generally as to the character and extent of the measure of reform to be sought in the administration of our church government, and, after a free and general discussion of this question, to adopt resolutions expressive of some definite principles for the consideration of the Connexion at large, and thereafter, if confirmed at a second meeting of delegates proposed to be held in July next, to be presented to Conference during its next session.

Besides this primary and grand object, however, the mutual encouragement to be derived by a large representative assemblage of coadjutors in the same struggle for religious liberty, under circumstances of virulent opposition, and the mutual confirmation thereby given in the righteous principle by which we trust our adherents are actuated, are not the least advantages which might be expected to result from so interesting an occasion.

The Committee, desirous that these important deliberations should be entered upon with due solemnity, had agreed that the preceding Good Friday should be set apart as a day of Fasting and Prayer in reference to the serious business to which the attention of the delegates was about to be called. Arrangements were accordingly made for suitable services on that day, and, by means of public advertisement, the members of the Association and its well-wishers throughout the Connexion, were entreated to unite their prayers for the Divine assistance and blessing.

For the purpose of accommodating the numerous friends who it was expected would attend from various parts in the neighbourhood, as well as to afford a temporary asylum to the persecuted society cruelly expelled from the more splendid but less grateful temples which themselves had largely contributed to rear, an extensive and commodious edifice, denominated the "TABERNACLE," had been erected upon a piece of vacant land in Stevenson's-square. The building, though entirely of wood, is firmly put together; its conveniences for hearing and for effect to the eye are admirably contrived, and when containing an audience of two thousand five hundred persons, (which is the number it is capable of containing,) presents a spectacle of the most imposing and pleasing description.

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

At the Tabernacle prayer meetings were held at six o'clock on the mornings of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. At half-past ten in the forenoon of Easter Sunday, the place was formally opened for Divine worship, when an appropriate sermon was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Dr. Warren from Psalm, 132, v. 7—9.

In the afternoon an impressive sermon was preached by the Rev. James Lamb, from Ireland, and in the evening at six o'clock another suitable discourse was delivered by Mr. W. Sigston, of Leeds.

The venerable Mr. Wilkinson, who had for nearly forty years been leader of the choir at Oldham-street Chapel, with a numerous band of vocal and instrumental performers, conducted the singing with great effect. The loud songs of praise issuing spontaneously from so large a concourse of persons, together with the eminently religious feeling which seemed to pervade the whole assembly, strongly reminded many present of what Methodism was in olden times.

The congregations on these occasions were literally overflowing, and in the afternoon it became necessary to send out a person to address a large number, who, unable to gain admission, had assembled around the building. The collections at the three services in the Tabernacle, towards defraying the cost of the erection, amounted to something more than one hundred guineas!

The local preachers amongst the delegates were many of them employed at the same time in conducting the services at the different places of worship connected with the Association in the town and neighbourhood, and, in the afternoon, a public camp meeting was held in a convenient situation, near Zara-street, which was numerously attended.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

On Monday evening, the 20th ultimo, at six o'clock, a public meeting was held at the Tabernacle, Charles Parker, Esq. of Darlington, being called to the chair, when the audience was addressed by several speakers on the subject of Methodistical grievances.

On Tuesday evening, the 21st, at six o'clock, a public tea meeting was held in the Tabernacle, at which about 1300 persons took tea together, presenting a scene of great and lively interest. The company was afterwards addressed at large on topics relating to the occasion.

On Wednesday evening, the 22nd, a meeting of the members of the Association, exclusively, was held at the Tabernacle, when some account was given of the progress of the delegate business, and several gentlemen addressed the meeting relative thereto. These meetings were in general crowded to excess, and were prolonged to a late hour.

## DELEGATE MEETINGS.

The delegates, generally, arrived in Manchester on Saturday evening, the 18th ult. On the Monday morning following, at six o'clock, they were assembled at a preliminary meeting to make the necessary arrangements for business, when George Cookman, Esq. of Hull, was unanimously elected chairman of the meeting; and William Wood, Esq. and Dr. R. B. Grindrod, of Manchester, and Mr. John Wood, of Liverpool, were appointed to act conjointly as secretaries. The sittings were continued, by adjournments, until the following Thursday at noon, the delegates assembling at six, nine, and two o'clock of each day. The meetings were held in the body of Oak-street chapel, the gallery of which was open to members of the Association, who were admitted by ticket.

The proceedings of the delegation were conducted with great unanimity, and in the regular order of public business; the progress of which was much facilitated by the gentlemanly and business-like manner in which the duties of the chair were discharged. The speaking, in general, was animated and impressive, ex-

hibiting all the interesting features of free, unshackled debate upon great and important questions; whilst the tone and character of the observations, in the opinion of competent judges, were oftentimes such as might reflect credit on more distinguished deliberative assemblies. The number of delegates present, exclusive of the members of the Manchester and Liverpool Committees, was upwards of eighty. The following is a list of their names, and the places they represented:\*

Those marked \* are not official.

<i>Bolton</i> .....	Mr. — Ormerod.	<i>Northwich</i> ....	Messrs. John Thompson, William Wallace, John Sutton.
<i>Barnsley</i> .....	Messrs. James Edgar, Joseph Woodroffe, and John Tallor.	<i>Nantwich</i> ....	H. M. Bunbury, Esq., Messrs. Richard Horion, and George Robinson.
<i>Bury</i> .....	James Livesey, Esq., and Messrs. J. R. Kaye & S. Lord.	<i>New Mills</i> ....	Messrs. John Beard* and Thomas Waller.*
<i>Blackburn</i> ....	Mr. — Stephenson.	<i>Oldham</i> .....	Messrs. Frederick Jackson, William Knott, and — Jaquiss.
<i>Birmingham</i> ...	Mr. William Lilly.	<i>Preston</i> .....	Messrs. Joseph Pomfret and John Johnstone.
<i>Bradford</i> .....	Mr. Thomas Watkins.	<i>Rochdale</i> ....	Messrs. Thomas Booth, Stephen Broad, Samuel Heape, John Howard, John Petrie, and James Hoyle, Esq.
<i>Burnley</i> .....	Messrs. Thomas Wilkinson, Peter Lord, William Ince, and Peter Law.	<i>Salford</i> .....	Messrs. Thomas Barlow, William Matthews, and — Procter.
<i>Carrickfergus</i> ...	Mr. Samuel Hay.*	<i>Skipton</i> .....	Mr. Thomas Wilson.
<i>Carlisle</i> .....	Mr. T. J. Cox.	<i>Sheerness</i> ....	Mr. Richard Brightman.
<i>Clitheroe</i> .....	Mr. John Broadley.	<i>Stourbridge</i> ..	Mr. — Haynes.
<i>Dudley</i> .....	Rev. John Gordon.	<i>Stockport</i> ....	William Smith, Esq. Messrs. George Rawlinson, John Whittingham, David Brook.
<i>Dublin</i> .....	Mr. David Lambert.	<i>Sheffield</i> .....	Mr. George Turton.
<i>Darlington</i> ...	Charles Parker, Esq.	<i>Stoke-upon-Trent</i>	Mr. Edwin Bate.
<i>Glossop</i> .....	Mr. James Hall.	<i>Todmorden</i> ..	Messrs. Joshua Fielden, John Hill, William Slater, Eli Sutcliffe, and William Thomson.
<i>Glasgow</i> .....	Mr. William Gilfillan.	<i>Winchester</i> ...	Mr. William Redstone.
<i>Hull</i> .....	George Cookman, Esq. and Mr. William Sissison.	<i>Whitehaven</i> ..	Mr. Daniel Douglas.
<i>Heywood</i> ....	Messrs. Thomas Nield and James Wright.	<i>Wrexham</i> ....	Mr. Thomas Hughes.
<i>Keighley</i> .....	Mr. Joseph Blythman.	<i>Warrington</i> ..	Mr. John Lister.
<i>Lynn</i> .....	Mr. — Franklin.	<i>York</i> .....	Mr. Josiah Worrall.
<i>Liverpool, N.</i> ...	Mr. Richard Farrer.		
<i>Liverpool, S.</i> ...	Mr. Coulthurst.		
<i>Lane End</i> ....	Mr. Edwin Bate.		
<i>London</i> .....	Messrs. Robert Eckett and Joshua Nettleton.		
<i>Leeds</i> .....	Messrs. James Sigston, Protestant { Matthew Johnson, Methodists { J. Mallinson, and John Yewdall.		
<i>Macclesfield</i> ..	Mr. Samuel Wood.*		
<i>Manchester</i> ..	Branch of { Messrs. J. Wolstenholme Protestant { and Thomas Platt. Methodists }		

The following is a list of those members of the Manchester and Liverpool committees who were present at the meeting:—

#### OF MANCHESTER.

Mr. Joseph Brooke,  
Mr. Thomas Lucas,  
Mr. Thomas Taylor,  
Mr. William Jones,

Mr. Jabez Sanderson,  
Mr. George Hughes,  
Mr. Robert Lowe,

Mr. W. T. Hesketh,  
Mr. John Greenhalgh,  
Mr. Matthew Thackray.

#### OF LIVERPOOL.

Mr. David Rowland,  
Mr. John Beynon,  
Mr. James Pearson  
Mr. John Gleave,  
Mr. Wilson Ledger,

Mr. Charles Cole,  
Mr. John Bridson,  
Mr. Richard Widdows,  
Mr. John Stephenson,  
Mr. James Martin,

Mr. William Morgan,  
Mr. John Stoward,  
Mr. John Norris,  
Mr. William Johnson,  
Mr. Joseph Hiles.

Dr. Warren, and the Rev. Messrs. Emmett, of Yarm, and Lamb, of Dublin, all Wesleyan preachers, also attended of their own accord.

\* In consequence of some of the delegates being obliged to return home before the termination of the meeting, and of others not being present at its commencement, it is feared that some names may have been omitted; if so, it is particularly requested that the parties may furnish them to the secretary, Wm. Wood, Esq., Manchester, without delay.



In addition to the above, letters, in substitution for delegates, were received from the following circuits and places, testifying the most cordial interest in the cause, and expressing the sentiments of the parties on the great subjects to come before the meeting, namely, from

Appleby,	Diss,	Partington,
Bristol,	Edinburgh,	Ramsey, Isle of Man,
Bodmin,	Guernsey,	St. Austel, Cornwall,
Burslem,	Helstone,	Sunderland,
Barnard Castle,	Houghton,	Shrewsbury,
Cleckheaton,	Lostwithel, Cornwall,	South Shields,
Camelford,	Malton,	Selby,
Chorley,	Market Raisen,	Wallsend,
Colne,	Newark,	Worcester,
Derby,	New Basford,	Whitby,
Durham,	Newcastle-on-Tyne,	Workop.

As it is intended to publish shortly, in a separate pamphlet, to which an address will be prefixed, a full, official report of the proceedings of the delegates, it will not be necessary here to go into particulars. We may, however, give the following, as being the general result of the whole, at the same time wishing it to be observed, that the resolutions of the meeting are still under the examination of its sub-committee appointed to revise and prepare them for publication.

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLE.

*Resolved*,—That the basis of the plan for a reformation of the existing abuses in Methodism shall be the principle of the right of interference on the part of the members of the Church, in the regulation of all its affairs.

#### PROPOSITION I.

That leaders' meetings be composed, as usual, of the stewards and leaders of each separate society; local preachers' meetings, of all the local preachers of the circuit; quarterly meetings, of the stewards, leaders, local preachers, and trustees of the circuit; the itinerant preachers having a voice in all such meetings, and the superintendent preacher being *ex officio* president of the same; but should any superintendent refuse to put to the vote any resolutions, regularly proposed, then the meeting shall have the authority to appoint another person to be, for that time, the chairman of the meeting.

#### PROPOSITION II.

That leaders' meetings have authority to transact all business connected with the societies to which they belong; local preachers' meetings to manage, as usual, all matters relating immediately to the work and office of local preachers; and quarterly meetings to have the control of all the affairs of the circuit.

#### PROPOSITION III.

That all our rules be based upon the principle that we exist as a Connexion for purposes purely religious; that they be published for the information of the whole body, their meaning being first unequivocally defined, and that no rule or regulation be considered binding upon the Connexion until it has received the approbation of a majority of the societies, through the medium of their respective quarterly meetings.

#### PROPOSITION IV.

That the discipline of each circuit be administered by its own local authorities; an appeal lying from the leaders' and local preachers' meetings to the quarterly meetings, whose decision, without the interference of either district meeting or Conference, shall be final.

#### PROPOSITION V.

That unrestricted discussion on all subjects affecting the interests of the body be allowed in all our official meetings, every question being decided by the majority.

#### PROPOSITION VI.

That the members of society by means of the leaders, in conjunction with the other officers of the circuit, be represented in all district meetings, and in Conference, according to some equitable plan of lay delegation to be adjusted between the preachers and the delegates at the approaching Conference to be held in Sheffield.\*

It may be interesting, at any rate it is some indication of the feeling which prevails in the country in reference to the principle of lay delegation in Conference, to observe, that on passing this Resolution, out of ninety-four present only nine voted against it.

## PROPOSITION VII.

That the management of the financial affairs of the Connexion be placed exclusively in the hands of laymen, so as to disencumber the ministerial office from the burthen of secular matters.

## PROPOSITION VIII.

That as there are many members of society sincerely attached to Methodism, who most decidedly object to the establishment of the Theological Institution, and who, from the opinions they entertain thereon, conceive that the character of our ministry will thereby be injuriously altered, and the pecuniary resources of the Connexion diminished, and as it is obvious from the past prosperity of Methodism, without such an institution, that it is not indispensable, therefore the Conference should consent, rather than hazard a division of the Connexion, to give up the Theological Institution forthwith.

## PROPOSITION IX.

That Dr. Warren, and the various officers and members who have been suspended, or expelled for their conscientious opposition to the Theological Institution, or have left the Connexion in consequence of the unjust and unconstitutional treatment they, or their brethren, have received since the Conference of 1827, be reinstated in the respective situations which they had previously occupied.

On Thursday evening, the 23d ultimo, their labours having terminated, the delegates in general departed for their respective circuits, highly gratified with the result of their mission, strengthened in the principles with which they set out, and animated with fresh zeal and courage to prosecute the great undertaking in which they have embarked, an undertaking which has this important design, and no other, namely, to preserve undiminished the purity and efficiency of Methodism by the timely removal of its abuses.

On a review of the interesting proceedings which we have just briefly detailed, we think it matter of sincere congratulation to the friends of religious liberty in general, and to those of the Association in particular, to find the cause of Methodistical reform already in such prosperous circumstances, especially when it is remembered that scarcely six months have elapsed since the Association rose into existence. Since then it has traversed a considerable portion of the kingdom; wherever it has gone it has diffused itself over a wide surface, and now, as the preceding list shows, it has established outposts of great importance in a large number of places, in the majority of which its adherents are numerous and formidable, and daily increasing in strength. The cause is only in its infancy; but though an infant, it is healthy and vigorous, of large and rapid growth, indicative of that gigantic strength which, ere long, it will put forth in the complete demolition of the bulwarks of Conference misrule and oppression.

But say our preachers, "It is of no use for you to propose and discuss terms of concession,—we will concede nothing."

We deeply lament that ministers of the Gospel should ever have placed themselves in the position in which the Methodist Conference now stands; charges of the most serious nature, involving ministerial honour and common probity lying unanswered at their door, whilst they, unable to meet them, shamelessly come forward and declare their intention not to yield one iota of our indispensable rights; in fact, to yield to nothing, save the compulsion of numerical force, setting aside altogether the claims of justice and the rights of decency.

The progress of the cause, we conceive, is no longer matter of uncertainty. The undertaking in which the Association has embarked is by no means a novel experiment. The thing was tried in 1797.

The grievances, the operations of the reformers were, in general, the same then as now. The opposition was also the same, both as to its agents and its materials; and notwithstanding the ill-supported affectation of ridicule, contempt, and security on the part of the preachers of the present day, we venture to predict that the result of the present struggle will likewise be the same, with this only difference, that now the reformers, profiting by the experience of former times, will not be satisfied with solemn promises and assurances merely, on the part of Conference; they will accept of nothing without an indubitable guarantee.

Meanwhile, we sincerely pity the hapless wits who are doomed to the task of advocating a system which can only be maintained by the meanest species of sophistry, by the most unworthy specimens of dishonourable artifice, pious fraud, and jesuitical dexterity, that ever distinguished a corrupt clerical body.

It would not be altogether seasonable at present to remark upon the character of the propositions submitted by the reforming delegates, and we therefore reserve ourselves until the report of their proceedings shall be laid before the public in an official form.

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## ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

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### LETTER I.

*To the Editor of the Watchman's Lantern.*

SIR,—As the assumption and exercise of arbitrary and unconstitutional power by the Methodist Conference appears to form the chief ground of those complaints on the part of the people, which have unhappily issued in the expulsion of so many excellent characters, both official and private, from the Connexion, for the *unpardonable crime of uttering those complaints*, I would beg leave respectfully to offer you and your numerous readers a few thoughts on that important subject. My attention has been drawn to it by the cursory perusal of No. 5 of a little publication issuing from the partisans of the Conference in Liverpool, the only one I ever read of that *glimmering* production, in which the editor has endeavoured to stamp the character of “fallacious and slanderous misrepresentation” upon Mr. Gordon’s able and irrefragable statements made in his justly celebrated speech at the Music-hall, in Liverpool.

To establish the despotic character of the power which the Conference has assumed, it is only necessary to observe, that it possesses the sole deliberative, legislative, and executive authority in the Connexion. At its own sovereign and uncontrolled will, the Conference **makes, executes, observes, or violates its**

own laws, exactly as they may or may not correspond with its great and governing principle, namely, “that the people ought not, and must not, have any thing to do with the laws of the Connexion but implicitly to obey them, on pain of expulsion for the slightest deviation.” As for the *vox populi*, which the proverb tells us,—*vox Dei est*,—the traitorous sound of that “turbulent and rebellious” instrument has been unequivocally, and, by “the general of the order” himself, classed with “the works of the devil,” which the Son of God came to destroy, when he *officially* announced that “Methodism abhorred democracy exactly as it deprecated sin!” The reason of this is obvious, namely, because democracy cannot exist without more or less trenching on the sacred and inviolable “rights” supposed to be derived, *a jure divino*, of the Conference, in one or other of the branches of its aforesaid despotism, viz. either in the deliberative, legislative, or executive departments of its sovereign power.

When Mr. Gordon asserted that “the Conference exercises an irresponsible power, and that no check whatever is placed upon it,” his reference obviously was to all human control, and all responsibility to human tribunals. For the

sake, however, of playing off a sophistical quibble, the reverend commentator on Mr. Gordon's speech affects to be *too stupid* to perceive this palpable reference; and, by way of refuting the assertion, he asks "if Mr. Gordon has forgotten that the Methodists have the Bible in their hands?" And, "Are not the preachers responsible to the great Head of the church?" To these questions I answer, first, Thank God, they *have* the Bible in their hands; and that Bible teaches them that the power assumed by Methodist preachers, of enacting "gagging laws," destructive at once of liberty of speech, of the boasted "liberty of the press," and of the most sacred "liberty of conscience," and then casting precious souls, by hundreds, out of the fold of Christ, for an alleged breach of such atrocious laws, is a gross violation of both the spirit and precepts of that Bible, and diametrically opposed to the recorded practice of the apostles of Christ. This knowledge the Methodist people have; and, thanks be to "the great Head of the church," it is spreading with inconceivable rapidity, and irresistible effect, over the whole Connexion.

But what does this knowledge avail the people? It simply reveals the important facts, that both their hands and feet are made fast in the stocks of ecclesiastical despotism. In this degraded situation, and because the preachers have not yet succeeded in absolutely putting out the people's eyes, they are insultingly told that "The word of God in the hands of the people is a *check* against the exercise of that arbitrary and irresponsible power which the Association says is exercised by the Methodist preachers, *in enforcing the rules of Scripture.*" Enforcing the rules of Scripture! When and where, I ask, was any Methodist preacher, for the last 50 years, ever accused, or even suspected, of this *capital crime*? I know Methodism well; but I know nothing of such instances of deviation from the established "discipline of the Connexion," as to enforce "the rules of Scripture" instead of those of the "Methodist Conference." Nothing of the kind! On the contrary, it is Methodism, despotic, heartless, and now most destructive Methodism, as twisted and tortured into a most servile and cruel sacrifice of its best members, that the preachers are so anxious to "enforce." "A check against the exercise of that arbitrary and irresponsible power!"—What does this impudently sophistical sentence mean? I challenge the whole Conference to produce a single instance

since the noble struggle of 1797, of a preacher who has ever surrendered an iota of his despotic power in compliance with a remonstrance founded on the word of God. I solemnly declare I have never heard of a such a case; but now, when the attempt is being made to bring these gentlemen and their "rules" to the tests of Scripture and reason; nay, only to bring them back to the standard of the concessions wrung from them in 1797,—that attempt is met by the most insulting taunts, contemptuous defiance, and forcible expulsion of "the turbulent faction," as they are termed, that will not quietly lie down till they are thumb-stalled into all the unresisting patience of "passive obedience."

"Scriptural rules!"—Yes; only give the people these, instead of "the tyranny of modern Methodism," and in an instant tranquillity, harmony, peace, and love will extirpate "the demon of discord" "from Dan to Beersheba," out of every circuit, every chapel, and every heart in the Connexion! Yes; at the sound of that "jubilee trumpet" of reconciliation, from the pulpits of Methodism, and from the hearts of its preachers, every hostile weapon would be instantaneously grounded; and, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," every Methodist heart in the nation would respond to the welcome note; every bosom burn with triumphant joy, and every hand be stretched out to fold to the bosom the celestial messenger of the heaven-born peace! Nor would the thrilling sensation be confined to either the transports of the soul, or the expressions of the tongue; both the hand and the heart would spontaneously fly to the *purse*, and "that last refuge of the people's power," would vie with the noblest affections of the heart in pouring out its tribute of applause to heighten the triumphant victory of "Bible Christianity" over the *corruptions* of "modern Methodism."

But, Sir, I must descend from this, I fear, delusive flight of ardent hope, as too sanguine an anticipation of the golden age of spiritual glory and religious prosperity, for the present age and race of Methodist preachers ever to justify. The accursed love of power which unhappily characterizes all the acts of the Conference, whenever those acts come in contact with the inestimable rights of the people, and of the subordinate office-bearers of the Connexion, is now too notorious to be either concealed or successfully denied, and too tyrannical and destructive in its operations to be any longer tolerated. It is equally an insolent invasion of the divine prerogative



of a jealous God, and an unjust usurpation of the privileges of his children. Nor is there any attribute of which the Deity is more scrupulously tenacious. His *power* is the basis of his *glory*; and hence his continued assertion of his omnipotence throughout the inspired volume, which every where teems with both verbal and actual demonstrations of the important fact "THAT POWER BELONGETH (exclusively) TO GOD!" Therefore it is that every invasion of his children's privileges is an insult offered to their Divine protector, whose honour, as well as his love, stands pledged for their vindication and defence. Hence we may boldly ask, "And shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry unto him day and night? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily!" For "He who toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye," and woe to the men who wound the Redeemer of their souls "in the house of his friends." And, finally, the Church of Christ is the "spiritual body" of which he is "the living head;" and every stab which that body receives, goes to the heart of its omnipotent guardian.

Now, Sir, we may in some degree be enabled, from the preceding considerations, to estimate the awful extent of that "responsibility" which the Reverend *Illuminator* is compelled nominally to confess the Conference lies under, "to the great Head of the church;" a confession which is my second and last point for present consideration. I am sorry to say, from the reckless conduct of that Conference, that confession is not only evidently extorted by the necessity of the case, but resorted to as a mere *subterfuge*, under which to shelter the atrocious acts of its injustice, and thus to evade the consequences of their arraignment at a human tribunal. The circumstances of the case, Sir, but too fully justify this awful conclusion. Sir, had this tremendous responsibility its due weight upon the consciences of the Methodist Preachers, it would have been utterly impossible that they could ever have contemplated, and much less ever have practised, that combination of cruelty, injustice, and despotic tyranny

which characterizes the sacrifice to the Moloch of their ambition, of the hundreds of precious souls who, as the victims of that principle, have lately been cast out of the fold of Christ to perish for ever, for all that these faithless shepherds care about them.

Sir, this distressing subject is by far too prolific of matter for almost endless animadversion of the most interesting character, which is just now opening to my view, to be exhausted in a cursory essay like the present; I must, therefore, draw to a conclusion, as I would not willingly trespass on the limits of your accommodation for such communications, but may, perhaps, if agreeable, resume the subject on a future occasion. Meantime allow me to say that the noble stand which "THE ASSOCIATION," of which I regard the *Lantern* to be the official organ, has made against the inroads of corruption in the Methodist Connexion, founded as it is in wisdom, justice, and truth, must have the sanction of Heaven and the blessing of the Most High for its support and defence. Therefore I would respectfully say to that Association:—Be firm as a rock! compromise not an *iota* of your invulnerable principles. Your position is as SACRED as it is IMPREGNABLE. "The ground whereon you stand is holy." Your cause is "The church of the living God." "She that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!" "Mark well her bulwarks, and count her towers;" for "the shout of a king is in her camp," and "the Captain of her salvation" is in the midst of her: and, if his enemies will not yield to his righteous sway, THEY MUST AND SHALL BE CONQUERED! —I am, Sir, the cordial friend of your sacred cause, THEOPHILUS.

Liverpool, April 21, 1835.

P.S.—Should your columns be open to this and a subsequent article on the same subject, I shall, in my next communication, enter more minutely into the argumentative merits of the question of ecclesiastical power, as settled in the oracles of Divine inspiration.

## THE LATE MISSIONARY ANNIVERSARIES.

A great parade has been made through the country, during the last few weeks, by the preachers and their partisans, respecting the alleged increase in the amounts of the missionary collections, which is osten-

tatiously put forth as proof demonstrative of the "blessed re-action" in favour of the *priestocracy*. Nothing, however, is mentioned of the additional amount of expenditure this year incurred in the *getting up* of the exhibitions on the missionary platforms with something like *éclat*. The country was scoured for orators in every direction. Stale jokes were garnished out, to give them an air of freshness; threadbare speeches were brushed up, and report goes that a few new ones were actually manufactured; but of this we are not quite certain. The array, however, of respectable-looking "sleek-headed men who sleep o' nights," dressed in black coats, was most formidable, and *almost* sufficient to annihilate the vile Association, against which they came prepared to do battle. At Brunswick Chapel, in this town, the platform was flanked by police officers, with handcuffs ready, at the word of command, to carry into "durance vile" any destructive Radical who should dare to open his wicked mouth. So much for the reliance on popular feeling. But the collections,—surely they are an index of the feeling of the people in favour of the Theological Institution, &c.? Stop, gentle reader, while we "a tale unfold" on that subject.

At Grosvenor-street Chapel, in Manchester, on Easter Sunday morning, it was announced that the collection exceeded very considerably the amount in former years,—of course, intending to convey the impression that it was the result of the additional contributions of the general congregation. What will our readers think, when we inform them that, out of £64 collected, £50 was put into the box by one individual? They will, if we mistake not, agree with us, that whatever may be thought of the liberal spirit of the gentleman in question, the amount of the remaining collection, £14, affords very little indication of a re-action of popular feeling.

We will mention also a case in this town. A missionary box has for some time been kept at the Edge-hill railway station, many of the workmen being Methodists, or friends to the cause. At the time of the discontent first manifesting itself, many of these workmen demurred to contributing any longer. It was, therefore, distinctly promised by the person who had charge of the box, that if they would continue as usual to contribute, the money should not be handed over without their consent being first obtained. Accordingly the contributions were continued as usual. Previous to the late missionary anniversary, a meeting was called of the subscribers to this box, at which it was decided by a majority of thirty-six to three, that the money should for the present be retained in hand. Notwithstanding this decision, and in defiance of the previous promise, the money was presented at the meeting as the free-will offering of the workmen at the railway! Comment is unnecessary. "*Ex duobus disce omnes.*" The efforts made by "*our influential friends*" on the late anniversaries have been desperate, but the exertions have been too violent to be long continued. These remarks are made more in sorrow than in anger. The curtailment of missionary effort is not what we want; we only desire that the infatuated men who now rule the destinies of the Methodist body should be taught the necessity of timely concessions, and this, if we mistake not, is a lesson they will learn ere long. May they learn it before it be too late!

## PROCEEDINGS IN MANCHESTER.

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE, SUBSCRIBERS, AND FRIENDS OF WESLEYAN SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN THE MANCHESTER THIRD CIRCUIT.

*To the Editor of the Watchman's Lantern.*

SIR.—On the evening of April 24, the above meeting was held in Oxford-road Sunday School. After tea, the Chairman, the Rev. John Anderson, gave out a hymn from the Sunday-school Hymn Book, on the blessedness of peace and union, and then prayed. This being ended, he announced that the business of that meeting was to hear and receive the general report, &c., and that the persons present actively engaged in the good work might address the assembly. The Rev. R. Lusher then read the general report, which dwelt chiefly, as usual, on the general utility of Sabbath schools, and the special advantages, present and eternal, of religious knowledge, basing such observations on Lord Bacon's maxim, "Knowledge is power." It just glanced at "recent unpleasant occurrences, which it was not needful to detail," but congratulated the friends present on the general prosperity of the institutions; and after deploring the difficulty of obtaining adequate pecuniary assistance, and stating the actual increase of the debt left upon the institutions last year, closed by an exulting reference to the new Sunday School in New Islington, and the cheering prospects which it presented to that populous and necessitous neighbourhood. At length the names of conductors, &c. for the respective schools were read, when my name, and that of Mr. George Hughes, who has laboured in these institutions for twenty five years, were wanting. This, of course, I anticipated, having been previously expelled from George-street Sunday School, but no intimation had been given that Mr. Hughes was destined to be the second victim. By the way, this was precisely the order of proceeding pursued by John Anderson in our expulsion from society. I was first selected as their object of ecclesiastical vengeance, and in the name of the Blessed Trinity solemnly expelled the Wesleyan community, and then Mr. Hughes, who manfully and christianly defended the course I had adopted, and demanded my restoration, was ejected (but observe, not in the name of the Holy Trinity) from the same society. The omission of our names from the conductors' list was speedily observed by some present in the meeting, and a feeling of righteous indignation was evinced by several. Our names were not once mentioned by the reader of the report, but passed by as if by mistake. Conscious that their "crooked policy" would not bear investigation, they did not dare honestly to avow that the names of Messrs. Greenhalgh and Hughes were intentionally omitted, but, without such avowal, merely read the names of such conductors as were retained.

After the general and financial report had been given, Mr. Christopher Allen, teacher of the first class in London-road School, from which Mr. Hughes had been thus discarded, inquired why the report stated only six conductors for their school when their number was seven, and wished to know if some person had been omitted, and why such omission had taken place? By these posing questions, quite unanticipated, Mr. Anderson and his party were evidently confused, and after looking east, west, north, and south, for an answer, he gave the following reply: "The list of conductors has already been read, and if Mr. Allen had been attentive he might have known who the conductors are." "No," said Mr. Allen, "I wish you distinctly to state whose name is omitted from the list of our conductors." "That list," rejoined Mr. Anderson, "I say has been read, and that is sufficient." Here intense interest was excited, and considerable dissatisfaction evinced at Mr. Anderson's refusal to comply with so reasonable a request. Mr. Allen then finding they were determined to stab his friend and conductor in the dark, and covertly to obtain the sanction of the annual meeting, said, lifting up his voice that all might hear, "It's the name of Mr. George Hughes, our most valued and useful conductor, who is thus dropt from the list." Immediately one of Mr. Anderson's party inquired, "Are you a subscriber?" Mr. Allen said, and mark the telling and sensible reply given, "Yes, Sir, I am a subscriber. I give fifty-two Sabbaths in the year to Sunday-school labour, and am surely equal to the man who subscribes his ten shillings annually." Mark also the answer of Mr. Anderson; "No," said he, "you are not equal;" and immediately another of his party added, "Your labour is not an equivalent,"—"and as you are not a subscriber,

(continued Mr. A.) we shall not hear you;" and immediately he was clamoured down.

Then arose Mr. Jones, a colleague of Mr. Hughes, and, among other things, said, "I am a conductor of London-road School, and I protest against such unmanly and unchristian proceedings. Here you discard a man from office who is regularly at his post, faithfully and successfully doing his duty, and yet retain on your list persons who are mere ciphers,—persons whose faces I have not seen twice in the school the last twelve months." "Are you a subscriber," inquired Mr. Fearnly. "Yes, Sir," was the reply, "I am a subscriber, and give my labours beside." Perceiving that they were thus foiled in their attempts to silence Mr. Jones, as they had silenced Mr. Allen, because he was not a *money subscriber*, Mr. Anderson, with a fatality for which he is remarkable, cried out—"I tell this meeting it has no power in this affair—(cries of "Shame, shame;")—I did not design to use the power our rules give me, but as Mr. Hughes and his party seem resolved to rob this meeting both of its social and religious character, I tell you you have no voice in this arrangement. It is the work of the committee, and to them Mr. Hughes may appeal, but neither this meeting, no, nor even the subscribers, have the right of interference. If there are persons here dissatisfied with what we have done, they are not bound to remain with us; they are at liberty to retire from us. All we want is to go on in our own way, and do our own work. [Here a titter was excited by a recollection of what Mr. Gordon, at a public meeting in the Tabernacle, said of this unreasonable assumption—"Suppose (said he) a man puts his hand into my pocket, and I lay hold of his hand, and, by my superior strength, prevent the robbery, and the robber turns upon me and says,—Now, why don't you let me alone: all I want is to do my own work in my own way; and, if you feel aggrieved, you can appeal to the magistrate, who is my brother."]

About this time Mr. Hughes arose, and protested against his expulsion without first giving him a fair trial before the committee, of which he was a member, and proceeded, in a most telling manner, to exhibit the craft and injustice of Mr. Anderson's procedure. "Are you a subscriber?" said Mr. P. Bunting. "Yes," said Mr. Hughes, most emphatically, "I am a subscriber, and a better subscriber than ever you were." "We have not your name," said Mr. Napier, one of the secretaries. "Then," rejoined Mr. Hughes, "you have unjustly withheld it." This point, after some conversation, was adjusted, and Mr. Hughes proceeded for some time, amidst the opposition of his opponents and the plaudits of his friends. About this time a discreet and pious young man, a Mr. Elee, inquired from Mr. Anderson why Mr. Hughes was ejected from school, when the customary question was put,—*"Are you a subscriber?"* Mr. Elee replied, "I am a teacher and a friend, and think I have a right to be heard." "No," said Mr. Anderson, "you shall not be heard. You have no right, except by sheer courtesy. And now, those of the subscribers who think the report, which has been moved and seconded, should be received, will signify the same by a show of hands." About 18 were held up, in a company of about 200. I then arose, and inquired, "Does this motion involve Mr. Hughes's case?" To which both Mr. Anderson and Mr. Lusher replied, "*It does not.*" Here observe that we had no very sturdy objection to the report itself, and did not wish to prevent its reception by the meeting, except so far as my case and that of Mr. Hughes were concerned; and after this explicit statement from two preachers, we did not feel at liberty to oppose it. I, however, thought it needful further to inquire—"Will you allow Mr. Hughes's case to be fully and fairly discussed after you have disposed of this motion?" To this no reply was given, but amidst the noise and tumult of the meeting the motion was declared to be carried, which elicited clapping, thumping, and shouting from our opponents, as though some great conquest had been achieved. Then was Mr. Hughes's case resumed, and the direful consequences to London-road School were impressively pointed out, if his ejection was finally determined upon. The only reply to these remonstrances worth notice, given by Mr. Anderson, was the following:—"The conductors are selected by the committee, subject to the approval or rejection of a leaders' meeting." "That," said Mr. Hughes, "is all I claim: let the leaders reject me, and I submit, but I protest against this public degradation by a mere junto." "It was not a junto," said Mr. Anderson; "it was the general committee." "I deny it," replied Mr. Hughes. "Well," said Mr. Anderson, "it was a select committee, which is the same thing, appointed by the general committee." "Appointed for what?" inquired Mr. Hughes—"not to eject me from school, but to make arrangements for this public meeting. I deny to that committee the power they have assumed and exercised." Here Mr.



R. Mayor arose, and, after some difficulty, obtained a hearing. A little allowable policy was adopted by him to secure attention, and for some time it was unapparent which party he was about to vindicate. Permission allowed, he said—"I was a member of that select committee." "Sit down," said Mr. Anderson. "We shall not hear you: we are not come to lay delegation yet, thank God!" "I have a right to be heard," Mr. Mayor replied, "and, as a member of the select committee, I will be heard; and I tell it to this meeting that six were present at that committee, and three were favourable to Mr. Hughes's expulsion, and three were not. (Cries of "Hear, hear," and "Shame, shame," from various parts of the meeting.) Yes, and I will say further, that no motion was ever put to that meeting at all." Judge who can of the indescribable horror of the meeting when this disclosure was made. Where now was the truth and consistency of Mr. Anderson's statement, that Mr. Hughes was expelled by the general committee, and, when this was denied, his deliberate assertion that his expulsion was the work of the select committee!

Let these astounding facts, perfectly indisputable, go through the length and breadth of Christendom, that our united forces may at once give a death-blow to that irresponsible and irresistible power which not only crushes the liberties of freeborn Englishmen, but involves its possessors in such infamy!

I have since been told by another member of that committee, that two of the six present had no right in that meeting, but had been invited to attend; so that, as far as I can judge, only one person present, besides the Rev. John Anderson, was favourable to an act which he publicly asserted to be the act and deed of the committee!

Amidst all this ferment and disorder, Mr. Anderson gave out "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and concluded by prayer.

These statements will be certified to be correct by many whose names I am prepared to give.—Yours, &c.

April 30, 1835.

JOHN GREENHALGH.

## PROCEEDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

### EXPULSION OF Mr. ABRAHAM HARRISON, LOCAL PREACHER IN THE LIVERPOOL SOUTH CIRCUIT.

[Some time since we received a letter from Mr. Harrison, with a brief account of his expulsion, from which we select the following extracts.]

*To the Editor of the Watchman's Lantern.*

SIR,—It is upwards of twenty-one years since I joined the Methodist society, and the greatest part of this long period I was employed as a local preacher. During the last seven years I have been a member of brother David Rowland's class, and having been intimately acquainted with him for more than fifteen years, I have, of course, had many opportunities of observing his exemplary conduct both in his public and private character. I always found him the same humble, pious, disinterested, and zealous follower of our Lord Jesus Christ; but he was obnoxious to the dominant party in Conference on account of the courageous manner in which he uniformly stood forward in defence of the people's rights. Having withstood them "to their face," with great ability, and proved how they had broken faith with the people, he was maligned and expelled, and still continues the object of their rancorous hostility. His numerous class was cast off about a fortnight before his mock trial took place; and though the members had notice that their tickets would be renewed, as usual, in the vestry of Leeds-street Chapel, and many attended in expectation of receiving them,—yet the preacher did not make his appearance; and it was found that his promises were remarkable for nothing but their non-fulfilment. At length, however, a note was sent by the preacher, announcing that "under existing circumstances" the class would not then be met for tickets, and another notice would be given to them; but to this day no such notice has been given! This can only be accounted for on the supposition that Mr. Rowland's illegal expulsion, on the sole authority of Mr. Samuel Jackson, had been previously determined upon; and it has since been publicly proved that this was in reality the case.

I was in daily expectation of receiving orders to discontinue attendance on my plan; and on the 21st of March Mr. George Marsden called both at my

house and warehouse, to intimate that I should be put on my trial at the local preachers' meeting if I did not join a Methodistical class on the following Monday. I attended the meeting on the 23d of March, when, after several suspensions had taken place, my case was called.

Mr. COOK.—Does brother Harrison meet in class?

Mr. HARRISON.—Yes.

Mr. COOK.—In whose class?

Mr. HARRISON.—In brother David Rowland's.

Mr. DIXON.—What class?

Mr. COOK replied "Rowland's," as if he was too odious to be called brother.

Mr. DIXON rejoined "Rowland's?" as though he considered Mr. Rowland a troubler in our Israel!

Mr. HARRISON then rose and stated that he had been a member of brother Rowland's class for the last seven years; that about two years since he removed into the south end of the town, and was recommended by Mr. Bunting as an accredited local preacher of the North Circuit, and that not judging it necessary to leave his class or change his leader, he had continued to meet with brother Rowland up to the present time. He had expected his case would have been disposed of at the last local preachers' meeting, for at that time it was said brother Rowland had been expelled, though he (Mr. Harrison) never considered him as having been legally expelled. His name was still continued on the plan, and he had been allowed to go on in his work through the quarter without interruption, and he thought the travelling preachers ought at least so far to make themselves acquainted with official characters as to know whether or not they were members of society.

Mr. DIXON.—I think so too.

Mr. HARRISON.—It does, however, appear to me that my name might have been on the plan for the last two years and a half, and the brethren in the South Circuit not have known whether I was in society or not. This shows great neglect on the part of the travelling preachers.

Mr. COOK.—I deny it; for brother Harrison told me himself that he met in Mr. Rowland's class.

Mr. WALTHER.—And I can clear Mr. Marsden, for he told me that he waited on brother Harrison, both at his house and his shop, and could not see him at either place.

Mr. HARRISON.—He did on *Saturday last*, only two days before the meeting.

Mr. DIXON.—The question is, do you intend to join a constitutional class?

Mr. HARRISON.—I have deliberately considered the matter, and my firm and unalterable conviction is, that brother Rowland, at this moment, is a man of God, and that he has been unrighteously dealt with, therefore I intend to continue a member of his class.

Mr. WHITTAKER commended Mr. Harrison for so frankly delivering his sentiments; and Mr. Dickinson said such conduct was praiseworthy.

Much has been said about "a case without a parallel." I think mine may be ranked among that class, for I never before heard of an instance of a man not in society being allowed, for nearly four months, to perform his regular routine of duties on the preachers' plan; and I hope this instance will convince our preachers of the necessity of visiting and watching over the people, "as those that must give an account." They tell us that they tremble at the thoughts of a division, and profess great love for peace and union. I hope they will be ready to do justice to our injured brethren at the approaching Conference; if not, I, for one, shall believe that their great pretensions are all a farce.—Yours, &c.

A. HARRISON.

## THE REV. GEO. MARSDEN AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

*To the Editor of the Watchman's Lantern.*

SIR,—At stirring times like the present, facts are frequently brought to light and discoveries made, which, in the "piping times of peace," have slumbered in undisturbed oblivion. It has long been supposed by the discontented and disaffected portion of the Methodist societies, the "scum" of the Con-

nexion, as happily expressed by a Methodist preacher, that our ministers have habitually and shamefully neglected the interests of the Sunday Schools. It has been thought that the Sabbath afternoons of our preachers were so fully occupied at the dinner tables of "our influential friends," that no portion of such

valuable time could possibly be spared for the edification of such a "low set" as the Sunday-school teachers generally are supposed to be. Having been one of this humble class myself for the last fifteen years, and during the whole of that period never having seen the face of a Methodist preacher within the walls of the school (though one of the largest in the town) but once, judge of my surprise on hearing it announced from the pulpit of Mount-pleasant Chapel last Sunday, that the Rev. G. Marsden, (*mirabile dictu*) *having a little spare time on his hands!!* that afternoon purposed giving an address at the Sunday School lately opened in Lime-street!\* That the congregation might have the evidence of their senses that such an occurrence really did take place, he most graciously invited the parents and friends of the children to attend. Think of that, Master Editor! Surely the slanderers and maligners will now be put to shame. Who will now venture to assert that the Me-

thodist preachers are not the warmest friends of Sunday Schools, the most active and energetic in their endeavours to promote their interests? True, they have expelled a number of the eldest and most useful superintendents and officers from the schools, contrary to law, as well as to the opinion of their official adviser, the general secretary, Mr. Radcliffe, and caused teachers and children to retire by wholesale, from the schools, in disgust; and in violation of a sacred promise, they have superseded the Sunday-school Committee, without any appeal to the leaders' meeting. But let it pass; one act of such condescension on the part of the Rev. G. Marsden, chairman of the district, is surely worth it all. I hope you will mention this circumstance in your next *Lantern*, tending, as it does, to exculpate the preachers so triumphantly from the charge of negligence.—I am, yours, &c.

A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.  
May 1st, 1835.

\* See *Watchman's Lantern*, p. 132.—Edit.

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Meeting in the Potteries.*—A meeting was held on the 22d ultimo, in Bethesda school-room, Shelton, in the Potteries, to explain the objects of the Wesleyan Association: the chair was taken by Mr. Thos. Hancock, and the number of persons who attended was from 1200 to 1400. The speakers on this interesting occasion were Mr. Thompson, Mr. Hughes, Dr. Warren, and Mr. Wallace, who were heard with great attention throughout; but when the meeting was just closing Mr. Powell claimed to be heard, on the ground that a challenge had been thrown out by the opposite party to meet the opponents of reform if they demanded a discussion on the subject. At this late hour of the meeting the thing was impracticable; but upon Mr. Powell being assured by Mr. Hughes that on another occasion, the time and place being publicly announced, they would most readily meet him for discussion, he declined acceding to such a proposition. As on most other occasions, the Association was served by this ineffectual opposition, and the audience were the more strongly convinced that the better cause lay on the side of a necessary Methodistical reform. It was currently reported, the day following, that the chairman had received a summons to stand his trial for presiding at the meeting.

*Birmingham.*—A meeting of the Wesleyan Association was held at Birmingham, on the 23d ultimo, the spacious Baptist Chapel at that place being kindly lent on that occasion. Immediately after the commencement of the meeting, by singing and prayer, a scene of the most unmannerly uproar and confusion ensued, which continued for nearly an hour. The actors, who outraged all pretensions to decent and peaceable conduct, were the Conference party, who were sanctioned by the presence and approval of Mr. Waterhouse, the superintendent of the Birmingham circuit. A gentleman present at length effected an arrangement by which each speaker was to have a fair hearing, and not to occupy more time than half an hour. The meeting was addressed by Mr. D. Rowland, Mr. Gordon, Dr. Warren, and Mr. Hughes on behalf of the Association, and it was soon discovered that the cause of this organized opposition was a sensitive aversion to hear plain statements of truth, based upon the evidence of undeniable facts; it is therefore not to be wondered at that a vexatious interruption was kept up at intervals during the whole of the evening. Although there were six travelling preachers present, only two of them ventured upon a reply, and that at very inconsiderable length. Mr.

Waterhouse said he came to defend himself, but being unexpectedly confronted as to certain Confidential proceedings at Dudley, he appeared under great disadvantages in the meeting. Mr. M'Donald volunteered a defence of the special district meeting at Manchester which suspended Dr. Warren, but he completely failed to remove the impression which he perceived the meeting had taken upon that, as well as other subjects connected with Methodistical misgovernment. Upon the whole this meeting will not have lost its effect in promoting the objects of the Association, the questions in dispute have been fully brought out before the people of Birmingham, and they will know how to estimate their importance from the character of the opposition which was raised against them. The Methodist reformers at Birmingham may now calculate upon an increase of their numbers: with the assistance that has been given them from Liverpool and Manchester they have fought the battle well, and so far from being defeated, as is stated in the *Watchman*, they have gained a great moral triumph, and this must remain for ever a settled point, so long as nothing better than noisy clamour and pugnacious opposition can be brought forward against acknowledged principle and sound argument. To the Dissenters and the friends of liberty at Birmingham great praise is due for their support on this occasion.

*Dudley.*—We understand that the Rev. John Gordon is busily engaged in delivering lectures to the societies of this circuit, and meets with the most flattering encouragement. The recent very extraordinary proceedings of the superintendent in regard to this popular and much-respected gentleman are about to be detailed in a pamphlet, from which we may venture to promise our readers some interesting extracts.—Mr. Rowe, the second preacher, whose offence is his having lived at peace with the people, and who, we hope, will turn out an able advocate of the people's rights, has received notice of trial at the district meeting next week.

*Devonport.*—The work of religious despotism still progresses in the Devonport district. "On Wednesday last," says one of the officers, in a letter addressed to the editor of the *Christian Advocate*, "another of those modern inquisitorial courts, called Special District Meetings, was held at Tavistock, not for the purpose of trying an 'arrogant

suffragan' for his misdeeds, but, on the contrary, an amiable man, Mr. Averill, the second preacher in the Camelford circuit, for having done all in his power to save an entire circuit to the Wesleyan Connexion. The charges brought against Mr. Averill, by 'a tool of the faction,' amount, in substance, to the monstrous crimes of *keeping* a good conscience, and *not* aiding and abetting the destroyer, in his awful work of scattering the flock of Christ. Several influential gentlemen accompanied Mr. Averill from this circuit to Tavistock, for the purpose of dispassionately stating to 'the court' who was in point of fact *the wrong-doer*; yet, strange to say, through a mere quibble of the assembled priestocracy, those respectable individuals were not admitted, notwithstanding Mr. Averill had been desired, by letter from the chairman, 'to bring any witnesses which to him (Mr. A.) might seem meet.' Under these disadvantageous circumstances Mr. Averill refused to take what, by a misnomer, is termed 'his trial;' but he has subsequently been informed, we understand, by a letter from the secretary, that the brotherhood had unanimously decided that he should be suspended."

*Liverpool.*—On Sunday, April 26, the Music-hall, Bold-street, was opened for public worship by the Association, when two sermons were preached by Mr. T. J. Cox, one of the expelled local preachers from Carlisle. On Sunday last, May 3, the Rev. James Lamb, the preacher from Ireland who attended the delegate meeting in Manchester, preached morning and evening. The congregations on all these occasions were overflowing. Last Sunday evening, after hundreds had gone away unable to obtain admission, it became necessary to hold an additional meeting for worship in the small room adjoining. This step of opening a separate place for public worship, has not been taken by the Association without most anxious and serious deliberation; but it was considered at length better to do this than to suffer the people to be scattered as sheep having no shepherd, numbers being so disgusted with the recent proceedings of the preachers and their party, that they will not attend their ministry under present circumstances. The numbers belonging to the Association are steadily and progressively increasing; animated by a spirit of union and determination, they continue to hold on their course, hoping for better times.



## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Phylalethes* need not have felt any surprise at the misrepresentations of the publication in question, respecting the Warrington and Birmingham meetings. We have long ceased to be surprised at any statement which may make its appearance in its *accurate and impartial* pages; and as to correcting any mis-statement, we suppose the editor will exclaim with the London preachers,—“We cannot, and will not betray the trust which we have received from our venerated fathers;” this trust being, of course, to throw dirt enough on the members of the Association, in the hope that some of it will adhere. We will not gratify this impertinent gentleman's curiosity so far as to inform him the amount of the Warrington collection, but he may rest satisfied that it amounted to many times twenty shillings, and all obtained by *fair means*.

The last *Illuminator* contains such a medley of falsehoods in reference to the proceedings which took place at Leeds-street Chapel subsequent to the expulsion of Mr. D. Rowland, that we scarcely know where to begin to reply. We should not have deemed it worth noticing, but when such false accusations are circulated “by means of the Methodist preachers in any part of Great Britain and Ireland,” it becomes imperative to expose the mean tricks to which they will have recourse to serve their ends of preventing a fair hearing to their opponents

“Mark how plain a tale shall put him down.”

Mr. Samuel Jackson, in the Leeds-street leaders' meeting, refused to put to the vote a resolution regularly moved and seconded; it was then resolved, by an overwhelming majority, that another person should take the chair. The following week these leaders (not the Association, many of them not belonging to it.) were warned off the premises by a trustee created such only the week before apparently for the purpose. Of course, the retiring leaders' meeting carried with them their funds and books, but afterwards paid over the money they had in hand at the time of the expulsion. We can assure the *Illuminator* that the appearance of his first number had about as much to do with it as with the passing of the Reform Bill. It would seem, however, notwithstanding these “nefarious proceedings,” that the trustees of the chapel, though they expelled the leaders from the vestry, have no objection to receiving their money in the shape of payments. Mr. E. Partridge, one of the expelled leaders, informs us that an application was made to him from the trustees to retake his pew, to which he replied that he would, on the condition that he should in future hear *no improper language from the pulpit*, and be permitted to receive the sacrament as a hearer, (as hearers are often admitted to that ordinance.) This request was too much to be granted, and the pew was not taken. Well may the editor of the *Illuminator* desire his readers for “sustained,” to read “unsustained;” never were charges less able to be sustained than those brought against the leaders' meeting at Leeds-street Chapel. When ministers, professing to preach the Gospel, cannot refrain from abusive language in the pulpit, we think there is wanted something new in Methodism.

*Alquis* is right in his conjecture; we were previously aware of the notable specimens of Spartan virtue and Carthaginian faith which have marked the career of our contemporary, and shall probably, in a future number, enter into particulars. In the mean time we can assure our correspondent, indeed we are authorized to state, that the story of a “duel,” in the last *Illuminator*, is purely a fabrication of the pugnacious editor; and we may add that his assertion respecting the amount of the collection in the Independent chapel, Warrington, is equally false. *Alquis* may well inquire, what has become of the sprightly genius of the *Illuminator*?—Has he sent his wits a wool-gathering? Not long since he threw down his glove, and dared us to the combat. We accepted the challenge, and now he shows the “white feather.” If he dare not encounter us, surely he might “cudgel his brains” in defence of Mr. G. Marsden's grand doctrine, so *consistent* with the Fourth Commandment, that “a man may never read the word of God, use family or private prayer, attend sacraments or public worship, and yet not be grossly immoral!” Pretty doctrine for a Methodist preacher! Will the benighted editor *illuminate* as to its orthodoxy or heterodoxy? Is it the morality of the Gospel, the theatre, or the Koran? Dare he venture on the subject of the Liverpool Day and Sunday Schools?—illegal expulsions, and for what secret purpose?—the non-insertion of the Articles of Pacification in the journals of Conference?—the President's gagging circular? or the Rev. John Gordon's letters? We spare him the latter task; it is far beyond his calibre, and we disdain to fire a broadside at an opponent that is really not worth a stern-chaser. But we tell him that while he thus trifles with matters of importance, mistakes ribaldry for wit, and nonsense for ingenuity, and, unmindful of the temper (if indeed he ever possessed it) which ought always to adorn the Christian character, descends to base fabrications and cowardly abuse, it is not without reason that the preachers and their party complain that their defeat is hastened by the malignity and imbecility of the *Illuminator*. In support of their unhallowed cause, in vain they ask this modern Thersites,

“Except detraction, what hast thou bestowed?”

We have just received Mr. T. Liddell's Answer to the Pastoral Address of the Rev. T. Martin, published at the request of the Camelford quarterly meeting. He proves that the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Barber was unprincipled, despotic, and treacherous. We shall give extracts in due time, and notice the late public meeting of the Camelford Association.

*Argus* will find the circumstance mentioned by him alluded to in a preceding page.

*Theophilus* will perceive that he has not been overlooked. If he will call at the Association office he will find a note directed for him.

We also acknowledge Rev. R. Emmett, *Amicus*, *R. P.*—, and *Observer*.

Mr. Russell's communication is unavoidably postponed,—though dated 20th April it was not received until the 30th.

No. 15 will be published on Wednesday, the 20th of May.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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**No. 15.**      **WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1835.**      **Price 2d.**

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## ADDRESS OF THE FRIENDS TO WESLEYAN REFORMA- TION IN THE LONDON CIRCUITS.

We have great pleasure in affording our aid to the extensive circulation of the following address, which has just been issued by the London Wesleyan Reformers, and also published in the *Christian Advocate*. In some of the minor points referred to we do not exactly coincide; but we are willing to sink lesser considerations that all may unite in obtaining the great end we have in view—the reformation of the abuses in Methodism and the re-establishment of peace and harmony, on the only sure and lasting basis of confidence, on the part of the governed, in those who are set over them.

At no period in the history of Methodism has the Connexion been in a more agitated state than at present: convulsive throes are felt, which portend an entire disruption. *What is it that occasions those commotions? By what means can they be allayed, and the unity of the body be preserved?* In answer to the first of these inquiries, it is declared, that the Methodist Connexion is convulsed because its discipline has been violated!

I. Preachers have refused to allow official meetings to consider questions in which they have felt a strong interest. Until within a few years, it was thought to be the unquestioned right of our official meetings to address the Conference on any subject which, in their judgment, affected either their own circuit or any part of the body to which they belonged; but of late years they have been deprived of this right. Many official members thought that in the Leeds case the Conference acted contrary to the constitution of Methodism, and desired, through their quarterly meetings, to communicate, in respectful language, their opinions to the Conference; but they were insulted, by being told that they had *no right to address the Conference on that subject, and that their resolutions should not be put to the vote!!* The superintendent preacher now exercises the power of limiting the right of discussion to any extent he thinks proper; for, if he forbids discussion, his fiat is conclusive: *by refusing to put a motion to the vote, he can frustrate the intentions of the meeting; or, by quitting the chair, he can dissolve the assembly:* and the Conference has justified and commended such conduct!! Surely it cannot excite surprise that, as Englishmen, there are many who are determined not to submit to be deprived of the right of addressing the body exercising the supreme power of government over the Connexion, on any question which they may think directly or indirectly affects the interest of any part of the body of which they are members.

II. The constitution of Methodism has also been violated by itinerant preachers having expelled not only private members from society, but having also expelled local preachers and leaders, by their own authority alone, declaring that the consent

*of a majority of an official meeting is not required!!* The claim to possess this despotic power was first published at the time of the Leeds dissensions, in 1827: it was then, by many persons, protested *that the preachers could not exercise or claim such power, but in violation of the laws of the Connexion.* Considerable caution has been used in making known the determination of the preachers to have the power of expelling from office and membership, *without the consent of a majority of an official meeting*:—to have at once explicitly declared such an intention, and to have acted accordingly, would immediately have aroused such alarm and resistance as would have utterly defeated the purpose.

The doctrine of “inherent rights,” in the itinerant part of the Methodist ministry, to expel from office and church communion on their own exclusive authority, has, however, been advanced and maintained; and now the preachers are arousing the Connexion, by wofully carrying it into practice. How far such conduct is a violation of the laws of Methodism, to say nothing of Scripture, will appear from the following extracts from the Minutes of Conference:—In 1794 it was declared that, “*the preachers, in appointing leaders, choosing stewards, admitting and expelling members, consult their brethren the leaders and stewards.*” In 1797 the Conference declared that it then made “*great sacrifices of authority to the official meetings; giving the leaders’ meeting authority to reject any person as a member of society;*” and resolved, that “*no person shall be appointed a leader or steward, or be removed from office, but in conjunction with the leaders’ meeting.*” In the Rules of Society printed and published at the Conference-office in the year 1800, in the 5th page, it is expressly declared, “*But no leader or steward can be put out of his place but by a MAJORITY of leaders or a quarterly meeting; neither can any member of the Society be excluded, but by a MAJORITY at a leaders’ meeting.*” In the later editions of our rules, these words are entirely omitted; and, of late, it has been declared by the preachers, that *such is not now the law of the Connexion!*

It would have been strange, indeed, if the usurpation of such power had not been opposed. Many members of Society have declared that they will not submit to such a *change* in the discipline of Methodism; and some have nobly exposed themselves to the unmerited reproach, obloquy, and scorn, which the editor of the *Methodist Magazine* in his miscalled *Christian Retrospect*, and others, cast on them. They wish to be on terms of friendship and affection with the preachers, but they are resolved rather to incur their utmost displeasure than submit to such ecclesiastical bondage.

For opposing the spoliation of Methodism, many, in several places, have fallen under the exercise of the power they have opposed. The preachers, *by their own authority, have expelled some of the best men in the Connexion*; and thousands, sympathizing with their suffering brethren, are making common cause with them, resolving, by all lawful means, to oppose to the very utmost the domination claimed, and in some places already exercised, over the Methodist Societies. In some instances, as at Liverpool and Manchester, if not also at other places, not even the formality of any sort of trial has been adopted previous to expulsion. So arbitrary and appalling has been the manner of expelling men of unblemished reputation, that expulsion is not regarded as a *disgrace*, but as an *honour*, to the expelled; they are regarded as sufferers in the cause of righteousness and truth, and thousands are rallying round the standard, to maintain the same cause! So that, as it has been truly said that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church, the intended sufferings and disgrace inflicted by the preachers upon those who opposed them in the exercise of such power, are arousing the energies of the people, and the crisis is accelerated when the preachers must return to a mode of government conformable to the scriptural spirit of the Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies, dated August 1, 1797.

To prevent future disturbances, the just and scriptural rights of the people should be guaranteed by positive enactments of the Conference, expressed in

language divested of all ambiguity, giving to the official meetings a veto on all questions affecting office or membership; the power of discussing, in our official meetings, all questions affecting their interests; the right to be consulted on the enactment of any new rule or plan in which they may be in any way concerned; and that the rules of 1795, in reference to the trial of preachers, be made, as many believe they were intended to be, applicable in all cases.

Wesleyan Methodists! You now have important duties to perform, in aiding the efforts of those who are struggling for Methodistical and Scriptural freedom from ecclesiastical domination. You are not here advised to withhold your contributions from the Missionary cause, or from any other benevolent design, to compel the preachers to comply; it is to be regretted that such advice was ever given; but you are called upon to require the preachers to *acknowledge and regard your rights*. Remember, that the fear of man bringeth a snare; that the dearest interests of Methodism, of religion, of thousands yet unborn, depend upon the issue of the present contest. The question is, shall the Methodist Societies remain despoiled of those protections, from the exercise of unjust authority, to which they are entitled? Shall the preachers, and a few rich men, their adherents in this struggle, bring us into a state of subjection, equalled only by that in which the Romish Church is held; or shall we rejoice in the liberty wherewith God hath made us free?

In your respective Circuits spread information as widely as possible. Our opponents are very active in giving publicity to every thing calculated to promote their own views. Besides the Magazine, they have established a newspaper; but the real state of Methodism is not to be learnt from either of those publications; they are entirely on one side; you must, therefore, have recourse to other publications, which make known the evils agitating the Connexion.\* This should be done immediately, and addresses from the official meetings, and from members of society, should be sent to the next Conference; and two delegates should be sent from each circuit to the Conference, to urge the required concessions. The addresses should contain the following propositions, which are substantially the same, with only one addition, as those contained in the Declaration of London Trustees; they do not interfere with the just rights of the preachers, yet are sufficient to secure the rights of the members of the Connexion, and a great number of official persons have expressed their approbation of them.

I. That, as it has been recently affirmed that our rules do not require the consent of the majority of an official meeting to remove any of its members from office, and that the consent of a majority of a leaders' meeting is not necessary to expulsion of members from society, and as officers and members have been expelled without such consent, it should be declared that no official person shall be expelled, in any case, from office, without the consent of the majority of the meeting of which he is a member; and that no member shall be expelled the society, without the consent of the majority of the leaders' meeting. To obviate any objection to this, an appeal might lie from the local preachers' and the leaders' meetings, to the circuit quarterly meeting, the decision of *that* meeting, to be final.

II. That, as in several places superintendents have refused to permit quarterly meetings to consider questions relating to Methodism, in which they have felt strong interest, it should be declared that our official meetings shall have the unfettered right of addressing the Conference on any subject which they may think affects their interests; that no superintendent, as chairman *ex officio*, shall be allowed to prohibit an official meeting from passing resolutions expressive of its sentiments, for the purpose of conveying such sentiments to the Conference;

\* "Defence of London Trustees' Declaration." *"The Watchman's Lantern,"* &c., sold by Berger, Holywell-street, Strand. *"The Christian Advocate,"* Newspaper, 153, Fleet-street. "Reply to Watson's Affectionate Address," price 8d., *Christian Advocate Office*.



and that, if any superintendent should refuse to put to the vote any resolutions regularly proposed for the before-mentioned purpose, then the meeting shall have authority to appoint another person to be, for that time, the chairman of the meeting.

III. That, before the Conference pass any new rule or regulation affecting the societies, the opinions of the people, through the quarterly meetings, in the preceding year, shall be taken thereon; and unless a majority of the members, as represented by such meetings, agree to such proposed rule or regulation, it shall not become the law of the Connexion:

IV. That, as special district meetings, consisting of preachers alone, have been held for the purpose of determining upon accusations brought against preachers, such meetings having broken the peace of the society, severing the connexion between a minister and his charge, and occasioning serious divisions, it should be declared, that when any accusation is made against a travelling preacher, which requires to be investigated before the meeting of Conference, in all such cases the accusation shall be referred to a meeting of the preachers in the district, the trustees, leaders, and stewards of the circuit in which the accused preacher is stationed, the majority of such meeting to determine thereon, according to the rule of 1795.

V. That, as the Theological Institution has been established without generally consulting the societies, and as it has occasioned considerable uneasiness in the Connexion, the Conference should direct that the opinions of the societies be taken through the next September quarterly meetings, the continuance or discontinuance of the Institution to be determined by the majority of the quarterly meetings.

VI. That, as in some instances it has been questioned whether local preachers, leaders, or trustees, are members of quarterly meetings, the Conference should declare that the quarterly meetings consist of the travelling and local preachers, stewards, leaders, and trustees, being members of society.

As the June quarterly meetings and the Conference will soon be here, *let no time be lost*. Be discreet, courteous, bold, firm, uniting, persevering; then, instead of suffering long-continued agitation, success will speedily crown our efforts, and we shall be again united in the bonds of amity and love.

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## WESLEYAN METHODIST POLITY.

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### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—The present disturbed state of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies will be a sufficient apology for the communication now sent for publication in the next number of your *Lantern*.

It has been frequently asked—"How is it that the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism has been permitted to last so long, if it be so bad as it is represented to be, by the men now demanding a reform?" I answer the inquiry thus:—the personal piety of the members of this community has been such as to prevent suspicion, regarding either the discipline of the body or the integrity of its ministers. The laws of Methodism and the manner of their administration were not the subject of inquiry to many of the members of this society,—the grand object aimed at being salvation; and instead of asking questions relative to church government, the more important and general inquiry was—"What shall we do to be saved?"

Subordinate and disciplinary matters were not, and are not now, the subjects to which the great mass of the Methodist public direct their thoughts, but the "weightier matters of the law."

To *this*, as *one* cause, may it be attributed that a system of church government so despotic, so tyrannical, so oppressive, so Popish, has been permitted to last so long, and to excite so little attention. It is not, however, to be wondered at that occasionally the attention of the historian, the philosopher, or the politician would be directed to the subject, and standing on quite different ground, take quite a different view of this most extraordinary polity: hence we have the following statement coming from Lord John Russell in reference to this subject:—

“Could the Methodists be invested, indeed, by some revolution, with the absolute power which Rome once possessed, there is reason to fear that, unless checked by the genius of a more humane age, *the CONFERENCE would equal Rome itself in the spirit of persecution.*”

It was not, however, to be supposed that, in the progress of enlightened and liberal principles, Methodism alone should escape the notice of the inquiries and observations of a reforming age; and *now* the laws of this body and their administration are before the public as a fair and interesting subject for discussion.

Another question has also been sometimes asked, not so much by way of eliciting information as of confounding things which, having no necessary connexion should be viewed separately, namely,—How is it that Methodism has prospered, so much, if its discipline be so bad as has been represented?

My reply to this inquiry is,—that a thing is assumed in this question which, if it were true, would not even then decide the point at issue,—the controversy relating entirely to discipline and church government.

Now, let us examine dispassionately the *truth* of the assumption—the past prosperity of Methodism.

That Methodism has done much, and acted nobly in many instances, I do not attempt to deny, or even dispute; but to what have its triumphs been owing? To its government? no; to the manner of its administration? no; to the official conduct of its ministers? no. To what, then, may the comparative prosperity of Methodism be fairly attributed? I answer—to its *doctrines*, and to the zealous and pious exertions of its local preachers, class leaders, prayer leaders, members, &c., and not to its peculiar form of church government.

Methodism has prospered in despite of its arbitrary and despotic polity; this I maintain, and am prepared to prove. With a theology pure as the fountain of truth from whence it is derived; with a subordinate machinery admirably calculated to spread vital Christianity; with a mass of pious people distributed through all classes of society; with an original impetus given to it by its founder, and impressed on it by the laborious zeal of the first and second race of its ministers; with a considerable portion of originality in its operations; in a word, with its remarkable adaptation for doing good in all its parts, its despotic government alone excepted, its triumphs have only been *few*, and its prosperity but *comparative*.

The wheels of this vast moral machine have been clogged and interrupted in their progress onward, and instead of occupying the ground it now occupies in some places, nominally,—and in others contractedly,—it might, and would, but for the arbitrary character of its discipline, have made the *world* its field, and carried and distributed its blessings through the length and breadth of all lands.

As to its positive prosperity much may be said. Suppose we take Liverpool for an example, (and I can and will, if spared, furnish you with many more,) how stands the case? Thus; the numbers in Society stand *now* much about what they were ten years ago, as may be seen by comparing the minutes of the respective Conferences. This, however, is only a solitary case out of many that I intend to call public attention to, through the medium of your very valuable periodical.

As your contemporary, the *Illuminator*, will, no doubt, condescend to throw his eyes over this number of your publication, perhaps he will have the kindness to

furnish some scriptural proofs and arguments in support of that system of church government in the defence of which he has embarked. In making this proposal, or request, for as either it may be considered, I can assure you, *truth*, and not victory, is my object.

If I am rightly informed, the editor of the *Illuminator* will have the advantage of many very able men indeed, and ministers of the Wesleyan community, to assist him in this affair, and, consequently, the task to him will be comparatively easy. Allow me, through you, to submit whether it will not be much more consistent, and likely to conduce to the advancement of the mutual interests of all parties concerned, to deal in arguments on this important subject, rather than in personalities and abuse.

Let us, Sir, while we contend for our respective opinions on such an important subject as the government of an extensive portion of the Christian church, divest ourselves of our prejudices, and come to the subject dispassionately and piously, and, like the "noble" Bereans, "search the Scriptures" to see whether "these things" be in accordance with God's word; and then being fairly at issue, and determined to abide by the "law and the testimony," the world will judge, and "God defend the right."—Yours, &c. OBSERVER.

May 11, 1835.

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#### DR. MILNER'S OPINION ON THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In reading over *Milner's History of the Church of Christ*, printed for the Religious Tract Society, I find the following extract. Now that the College question is a subject of dispute, its insertion in your periodical may be of service.

Your's, &c.

O.

Todmorden Circuit, May 4, 1835.

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Speaking of Augustine, the historian says, "His treatise on Christian doctrine deserves to be perused throughout by young ministers, for the purpose of forming their taste and directing the manner, as well as enlightening the understanding and warming the heart, of him who undertakes to instruct mankind. As a preacher, Augustine doubtless excelled; but his excellence lay in exhibiting that which was useful to common people, not that which was entertaining to the learned. Perhaps in no age was the pastoral taste more depraved than it is in the present. A highly-finished, elaborate, and elegant style, is looked on as the perfection of a Christian speaker; and the manner, rather than the matter, is the chief object. It is not considered that an artificial and polished arrangement of sentences is lost on a common audience; and those who affect it are, it is to be feared, little moved themselves with the importance of divine things, and are far more solicitous for their own character as speakers, than for the spiritual profit of their hearers: yet in no age did God Almighty ever more clearly show, by the effects, what was agreeable in his sight. What a number of learned and elaborate sermons have been preached to no purpose! Even the truth of the doctrine that is in them has been rendered, in a great measure, useless, by the wisdom of words with which it has been clothed; while plain, artless, colloquial addresses to the populace, by men fearing God, and speaking of divine things in fervour and charity, have been attended with the DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT AND OF POWER, and souls have been rescued, through their means, from sin and Satan. Classical and ornamental knowledge is not the first thing to be aimed at by a pastor. If he is yet very young, his time, indeed, is laudably employed in cultivating his faculties in this respect; and if his genius for eloquence be strong and acute, he will soon learn the justest rules sufficiently for the purpose of his profession. There is, indeed, an eloquence in the Scriptures; but it is an eloquence adapted to the subject,—plainly divine. A pastor who has talents for speaking, attended with superior learning and endowments, will study to attain "a diligent negligence," that he may never overshoot the capacities of his audience, either

by refined reasonings, or by artificial elegancies of his diction. Plain, downright, above all things perspicuous and intelligible, without being rude or clownish, he will descend to the lowest comprehension of his audience; and his grandeur and sublimity will appear in things, not in words. He will gladly give up his reputation to the fastidiousness of critics; for he has souls to bring into Christ's fold, and is not solicitous of the praise of men. He will show, without designing it, from time to time, that he can speak more elaborately, and more eloquently; but eloquence will follow his subject, not go before it. This will be the plan of a man of genius and learning in the work of the pulpit: he will humble himself; that Christ may be exalted. But Christ can do his work by workmen of slower and more ordinary capacities, and he has often done so."—Vol. ii, pp. 314, 315.

#### VINDICATION OF MR. J. RUSSELL.

We have received from Mr. James Russell a long letter, in reply to one signed *E. Jones*, which appeared a few weeks ago in the *Illuminator*. We regret that we cannot find room for the whole of Mr. R.'s communication, as the castigation he inflicts on the aspiring youth is richly merited. We will, however, insert the introductory portion, and the accompanying certificate, attesting the truth of his statements, signed by eighteen official characters in the Wrexham circuit.

"I beg leave, (says Mr. R.) through the medium of the *Watchman's Lantern*, to reply to a letter signed *E. Jones*, which appeared in No. 7 of the *Illuminator*. I had neither seen nor heard of that letter till nearly a fortnight after its publication. Though the *Illuminator* had been regularly sold in Wrexham from the commencement, No. 7 was kept back, I believe purposely, because the *Tories* were ashamed of the letter in question, and were afraid it would materially injure their cause in this circuit. One of them expressed regret when he heard it was inserted. "If, (said he, to employ the language addressed to myself by a highly respectable gentleman not at all connected with either party) Edward Jones were as extensively known as the *Illuminator* is circulated, a reply would be unnecessary. So utterly insignificant is he, I am persuaded that none who know him could, through his representations, be prejudiced against you." But *E. Jones*, though only an apprentice lad, and a person of no importance in Wrexham, may be considered an individual of some respectability by those who know nothing concerning him; and I, therefore, feel it to be a duty which I owe to myself, to my family, to the church, and to that sacred cause with which I am identified, to reply to the foul attack which he has made on my character. He says that I engaged Dr. Warren and Mr. Rowland without having at all consulted Mr. Griffith. This is false; I did consult him, and he told me, though he did not approve of the suspension of Dr. Warren, as he was suspended he would not invite him for us; we might do so on our own responsibility. Mr. Rowland's mock trial had not taken place when we engaged him; he was not expelled when the bills were printed relative to the re-opening of our chapel, nor did Mr. Griffith know that he was expelled when he refused to read the paper."

Mr. Russell then proceeds to repeat his former statement respecting the proceedings at the quarterly meeting, which is confirmed by the following certificate:—

"We, the undersigned local preachers, leaders, trustees, &c. of the Wrexham circuit, having heard that a person, named Edward Jones, had published a letter in the *Illuminator*, the object of which is to contradict many of the statements of brother J. Russell's letter, which appeared some time ago in the *Christian Advocate*, and also to injure his character, that letter we have all heard read, and as far as our knowledge of the facts goes, we believe to be true; the following we are quite certain of:—Mr. Griffith acted arbitrarily in the quarterly meeting, by refusing us the privilege of expressing our opinion on subjects which we thought affected the interests of Methodism. He did manifest a spirit highly unbecoming a minister of the Gospel, by suddenly dropping on his knees while our brother Russell was speaking, and thus prematurely ended the meeting by prayer. Though we did not hear him speak disrespectfully of Dr. Warren, we have no doubt on our minds that he has done so in the way brother Russell has described; but his conduct at the last quarterly meeting far surpassed that in December; he treated us more like a set of idiots than rational beings,—more like African



slaves than British freemen; in the most contemptuous manner he exclaimed,—"I do not care for a thousand of such men as you." He broke faith with several of us, after having solemnly promised that the circumstance of denying us our tickets should not deprive us of the privilege of voting at the March quarterly meeting. After that promise, made in the house of God and in the presence of his people, he by a most disgraceful manœuvre deprived us of that privilege, and told us to our faces that we could not vote. He has just printed the new plan; seven of the brethren are struck off, without even a mock trial. Some are taken on without having been even named at the local preachers' meeting. The superintendent's will seems to be law. We also take this opportunity of indignantly contradicting the disgraceful report our enemies have spread respecting us, namely, that brother Russell has been the means of instilling into us certain principles, and that we are, therefore, incapable of thinking for ourselves. We wish it to be distinctly understood that we have embraced the liberal principles which we profess from conviction, and after mature consideration. We had witnessed acts of tyranny on the part of the preachers, and had read publications which furnished us with accounts of their tyrannical proceedings in other circuits, before ever we saw brother Russell's face. To that very useful and enlightening publication, the *Circular*, some of us are indebted for a considerable portion of the information which we possess on Methodist affairs.

We wish also to sympathize with our brother Russell, who has been the object of the malignant attacks of our opponents, because they thought he was the leader of the Opposition,—although no impropriety has characterized his conduct in this great struggle for our privileges, nor has he employed any unfair means to promote the interests of our cause. He has been calm, peaceable, and respectful; yet firm and uncompromising.

The interests of the Association have taken deep root in this circuit; we are going on prosperously, and have no doubt, if we acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, that he will direct our path.

BENJAMIN EDWARDS, Local Preacher and Trustee.  
 JOSEPH HOLLAND, Local Preacher, Leader, and Trustee.  
 ROBERT ROGERS, Local Preacher and Leader.  
 JOHN KETLEY, Local Preacher and Leader.  
 ROBERT ROBERTS, Local Preacher and Leader.  
 THOMAS HUGHES, Local Preacher and Leader.  
 JOSEPH JONES, Leader.  
 JOHN JONES, Local Preacher.  
 GEORGE PRITCHARD, Local Preacher.  
 WILLIAM BOODLE, Local Preacher.  
 GEORGE POWELL, Steward, and Circuit Steward at the  
 December Quarterly Meeting.  
 WILLIAM CASH, Local Preacher.  
 THOMAS BARCLAY, Local Preacher and Leader.  
 THOMAS EVANS, Local Preacher.  
 WILLIAM JONES, Leader.  
 RICHARD TURNER, Leader.  
 THOMAS PRICE, Leader.  
 SAMUEL EDWARDS, Leader.

*Ruabon, April 21, 1835.*

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#### MEETING AT NOTTINGHAM.

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*(From the Nottingham Review of May 8, 1835.)*

On Wednesday, the Rev. Dr. Warren, the suspended minister amongst the Wesleyans, gave a lecture to his friends, in the Methodist New Connexion chapel, Parliament-street, in this town. The admittance was by ticket only, of which 2000 were issued, and the place was crowded to the extreme. Many of the Wesleyans were there, travelling preachers, local preachers, and leaders, and of these many were from the country places, and some had come twenty miles to the meeting.

At seven o'clock, the Rev. Dr. Warren, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Lamb and Mr. Taylor, went into the pulpit. The Doctor announced that the Rev. Mr. Lamb, one of the travelling preachers from Ireland, would open the meeting by singing and prayer.

After this the utmost silence prevailed, and Dr. WARREN commenced his address. To report the proceedings, however, would occupy too much of our space, and we shall only attempt a slight sketch.

The Rev. Doctor expressed his pleasure in meeting so respectable a religious audience in Nottingham. His object was to search for truth, and above all, as God was his witness, to contend for primitive Christianity, and to show what he thought to be defects, more immediately connected with the Methodist body. He would not give place to any of his brethren, however venerable, or however respectable, in his deep love for Wesleyan Methodism. He knew it had been said that his conduct was at variance with this; but if he could make it appear that he had a deep anxiety lest Wesleyan Methodism should be lost in the refinements of modern Methodism, (and this feeling had brought him before the public,) he should then leave it for them to judge. He maintained that it was his desire to be a conservator of Wesleyan Methodism, and not a destructive. It had been said to him, "Why, if you love Wesleyan Methodism; if you love the Old Connexion; if you love that body of Christians you have been so long connected with; why do you not stay at home?—why should you come here to promote discord?" To this he would answer,—Had he been left in the quiet possession of his pulpits at home, they would not have seen his face on this occasion. If he had had a consciousness before God that he had been justly suspended, according to the principles of Wesleyan Methodism and the New Testament, he would not have made this appeal to their Christian sympathies. Suppose that, in some distant part of this neighbourhood, your dwelling has, maliciously or by accident, been set on fire; would you blame the man who came and roused you from your slumbers to assist in putting out the fire? This figure was verified in the treatment shown to himself and his flock. The Rev. Doctor adverted to the circumstances which led to his suspension for printing his thoughts on the Theological Institution; he contended that at the district meeting every member of it was implicated in the charges he had made, and that he did right not to appear before them, when they refused him the presence of one friend. He was not charged with immorality, heterodoxy, or incompetency; and he put it to the meeting whether, when Jesus Christ had said to him, "Go and preach the Gospel,"—whether he ought to have obeyed such a tribunal. He declared that, unless something faulty was proved against him, no man under heaven should seal his mouth. He was not the only one who had been suspended without any authority from the New Testament. The year before, that same Manchester district meeting had suspended the Rev. J. R. Stephens; and since that, the Rev. Mr. Forsyth had been expelled for entertaining a metaphysical opinion, which Mr. Wesley never left for a test, and which opinion had, in fact, originated with the late venerable Dr. Clarke. Where ministers could thus be cut off, without any charge of immorality, there must be something wrong in the system; that something needed a remedy, and must have a remedy, come when it would, sooner or later; but he hoped it would be soon, and satisfactory. His (Dr. Warren's) suspension was anti-Methodistical, notwithstanding the decision of the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chancellor, for it was proved to be so at a higher tribunal—that of common sense. The Rev. Dr. contended that a district meeting had not dared to suspend the venerable and venerated Alexander Kilham, for writing the *Progress of Liberty*; nor had they ventured to suspend Joseph Cook, though he entertained heterodox opinions on the witness of the Spirit. When the well known Daniel Isaacs wrote his *Ecclesiastical Claims*, though the Conference had to do with the book, they did not suspend the author. When the great Dr. Clarke, in his *Commentary*, wrote that which in the opinions of some was deadly heterodoxy, did they suspend him, or bring him before the Conference for it? No, they dared not do that; but when Dr. Clarke was no more; when Watson and Isaacs, and other liberals were out of the way, then they seized upon the humble individual before them, and suspended him. Was it right that ministers of the gospel should be treated in this manner? But how did it fare with the people? The people were in as sad a case as the preachers. In Manchester many officers have been expelled, for merely attending a private meeting, and that too without the sanction of the leaders, at the mere dictum of the preachers. Mr. Greenhalgh, a leader, was brought before the leaders' meeting, and the question was asked him,—“Did you write such a book? Did you attend such a meeting?” And this being admitted, without even asking the leaders whether he had done wrong in so doing, the Rev. Mr. Anderson took upon him to say, I pronounce in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that you are no longer a member of the Methodist Society. (Cries of

"Shame.") Since that, the preachers have excluded hundreds of other useful and pious men. The rules, as lately printed, said that exclusions should not take place but by the *concurrence* of a leaders' meeting, or *at a* leaders' meeting; this was thought very vague, and lately the preachers have taken upon themselves to exclude without the consent of a leaders' meeting at all. He held in his hand, however, a copy of the rules printed at the Conference press, in 1800, and then the words were, by a *majority* of the leaders, so that the important word "majority" had been sunk in the late editions of the rules, the law had been mutilated, he would leave them to judge by whom and for what purpose, but could there be happiness and peace in the societies in such a state of things? The Doctor entered into a long explanation how it was he discovered upon the trial, that the Plan of Pacification, which had been obtained after great exertions by the people, in 1797, had never been entered on the Conference journals, and was therefore an entire nullity, and had no legal existence in Methodism whatever; the Methodists had, therefore, no constitution, and they must have a new one and a good one; that was what he sought, and what he should seek in the spirit of Christian love. The claim of irresponsible and irresistible power on the part of the Conference, it was impossible, whether as men, as Britons, or as Christians, that they should submit to. The naughty Association, as it had been called, was a good and necessary thing; if it had not been formed, by this time the Methodists would have lost thousands of members that are yet safe. It had been said,—"If you do not like us, leave us;" but was that the language of the good shepherd? His answer was, I love you too well to leave you, and that was the answer of thousands more. They sought for reformation, not separation; not disunion, but concentrated, indissoluble union with the Methodist Connexion. In the Tabernacle, which would hold three thousand persons, and in other chapels in Manchester, occupied by them, many conversions were taking place,—the power of the Holy Ghost was among them. God was with them. What they sought and were contending for was, to be enabled to meet the Conference at Sheffield with an embodied host of Methodist Reformers, not in a spirit of bitterness, but reasonably, scripturally, respectfully, and firmly, to ask them by what rules they were to walk. The Rev. Gentleman concluded by an appeal to their liberality, to assist in defraying the expenses of the Chancery suits, and the collection was then made.

A very intense feeling was manifested to catch the Doctor's every word; there were one or two persons who a time or two sought to interrupt, but they were soon put out of the meeting; and whatever applauses were elicited, we heard a very few exhibit a different feeling by a hiss, and this was very partial, and scarcely to be noticed. The Doctor introduced to the meeting

Mr. TAYLOR, of Manchester, who said he had been a member twenty-four years, and a local preacher seventeen years, in the Manchester First Circuit. Though for some time deeply impressed with the evils of the system, he had endeavoured to do his duty, until Dr. Warren was suspended, in the manner they had heard.—Mr. T. entered at some length upon the Theological Institution, contending that *learned* preachers were not required by the Methodists, and quoted the opinions of Jonathan Crowther, Mr. W. Dawson, Mr. Pawson, and others who had spoken and written freely against a college.

The Rev. Mr. LAMB addressed the meeting with mingled emotions of sorrow, in that they had to appeal to the religious public against their own system of government, but of pleasure, from the conviction that he was the advocate of religious liberty. He could not agree with the Theological Institution, because it was a measure calculated to alter and deteriorate the entire character of their ministers, especially if it were carried not only without consulting the people, but in their very teeth. The Irish circuits would not suit persons brought up in such an institution, nor would they suit the Irish circuits. It had been asked if the government of the Wesleyan societies were so objectionable, why had it not been discovered before now? His answer was, that in many large towns there were six or seven sorts of Methodists existing, and why? because these had at different times left or been cut off from the Methodist body, by the arbitrary, despotic, and tyrannical conduct of the preachers. It was well known that one great object amongst the Methodists was personal salvation;—"What must I do to be saved?" was the grand inquiry of those who joined their body. These would not inquire into the mode of the government, until they found the results, and then, when they felt the evils, they would begin to inquire and look about them. Another question had been asked, how was it, if the system were so bad, that it had prospered? And to this he would simply answer, that its success was

owing to the purity of its theology, which was as pure as the fountain of truth, which was drawn from the Bible, and pointed its admirers to the heavens. When he looked at the great number of pious, holy people possessed by the societies, at the machinery which brought so many into active exertion, and its pure theology, he saw sufficient to account, under God, for its prosperity. To render them still more prosperous, he wished to see the people represented in every court of Methodism, in the leaders' and other meetings, and in the Conference also. (Applause.) The Reverend Gentleman then made some pungent observations upon a pamphlet, which had been freely distributed at the door, entitled "An Appeal to the Wesleyan Methodists, relative to the visit of Dr. Warren," but our space will not allow us to go into it. The Reverend Gentleman observed, that he had used the word despotism, and he asked, had not the Reverend Minister behind him (Dr. Warren) made out a case of despotism, when he was suspended for committing his thoughts to paper, and publishing them? Was not that despotism when a preacher held a ticket in his hand, and said to a member, "What will you contribute to the yearly collection?" and if the answer was unsatisfactory, refusing to give the ticket, and thus excluding the member from the society!—Was not this, he asked, despotism? Methodism wanted a new constitution—a scriptural one, and they would obtain it;—and he earnestly recommended them, in all their efforts, to seek reform, and not to defame, —to say as little about men as possible, and as much about the system as was consistent with truth; and he concluded by hoping that those he addressed would be the ardent supporters of scriptural reform.—(Great applause followed this speech.)

The Rev. Dr. WARREN said, this was one of the happiest days of his life, for he had had the pleasure of advocating the cause of truth, under the roof of a people who had led the van in resistance to the unscriptural conduct of the preachers; he returned them thanks, and assured them that even if defeated in the first campaign, they would have a second and a third, and he doubted not they should finally prevail.

The meeting broke up at a little after ten o'clock.

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## PROCEEDINGS IN THE NORTHWICH CIRCUIT.

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### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—It may be in the recollection of some of your readers that the Northwich Circuit was in a state of revolution in consequence of the unrighteous expulsion of Messrs. Wallace, Thompson, Edwards, Parry, and Griffiths from society by Mr. Sugden, the superintendent. In consequence of those expulsions, a meeting of trustees, leaders, and local preachers, was held in Northwich, at which meeting about twenty local preachers resolved to throw down their plans if the expelled brethren were not restored to their place and office in the church. A deputation waited upon Mr. Sugden; but he, full of Conference zeal, and true to "his order," refused to accede to the request of the meeting, and inadvertently let it out that "he durst not do otherwise than he had done." It was then resolved to have new plans printed and to work the circuit independently of Mr. Sugden and his supporters. Preaching has for some time been instituted in most places of the circuit. In some, the whole societies and congregations have espoused the cause of the Association, and in others the greater part of the societies and congregations.

It has happened very frequently during the last two months that the Association preachers and Mr. Sugden's preachers have attended on the Sabbath at the same place, and sometimes scenes of a very singular nature have occurred in consequence. The following is one:—On Sunday, April 12, Mr. Clarke attended his appointment on the Association plan at Norley. Mr. Salmon, Mr. Sugden's preacher, attended also. As the society and congregation to a man are with the Association, there could be no dispute as to who should preach. But as Mr. Salmon had walked ten miles, Mr. Clarke thought it would be a hardship to send the young man home without preaching; he, therefore, kindly offered to divide the pulpit with him, one taking the morning the other the afternoon. Mr. Salmon accordingly ascended the pulpit to conduct the morning service, Mr. Clarke remaining in the body of the chapel. No sooner had Mr. Salmon ascended the pulpit than the society steward (Mr. Lowe) immediately arose and exclaimed,—"How is this, Mr. Clarke!" Brother Edwards, who had accompanied Mr. Clarke, went up to the steward to say, that it was a compromise between the two



preachers. He replied, "We will have no compromise. If brother Salmon was wavering and unfixed in his principles, we would bear with him; but he has taken his stand, and we have taken ours." A scene of considerable excitement followed, upon which Mr. John Humphreys, a pious, venerable man, who has been a member of society about sixty years, took up his hat, and was in the act of retiring, followed by the greater part of the congregation, when Mr. Clarke exclaimed,— "Don't retire, my friends: I will take the pulpit,"—which he did, Mr. Salmon at the same time retiring. Many other such occurrences have taken place, but I cannot now narrate them, being straitened for time.—Yours, &c.

*Frodsham, May 4, 1835.*

M. M. D.

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## PROCEEDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

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### PROCEEDINGS AT THE LOCAL PREACHERS' QUARTERLY MEETING IN THE VESTRY OF MOUNT PLEASANT CHAPEL, MARCH 23, 1835.

THE REV. JAMES DIXON IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. Dixon commenced the business by calling over the names of the persons for examination; the subjects for inquiry being, moral character, ability for the work, doctrines, attention to appointments, &c. The first name called was John Russell, an old superannuated brother, worn out by age, who had been a leader and local preacher for nearly half a century, and whose name had been kept on the Plan out of respect to his age and piety, although he had no appointments. On the usual question being put,— "Any objection to John Russell?" a pause ensued, when Mr. Fulford asked if brother Russell was a member of society. This was intended to lead to something else.

Mr. DIXON.—O yes; he still continues to lead his class.

Here Mr. Fulford changed his ground, not daring to move that the name of his old friend should be left out of the Plan, on account of his being supposed to be a member of the Association; but said that as brother Russell resided in the other circuit he might be dealt with in that way.

Mr. DIXON.—The question is now before the meeting, and it may dispose of it as it thinks proper.

Here the matter dropped.

Mr. DIXON.—Any objection to William Coulthurst?

No answer being given to this question, Mr. Dixon inquired whether brother Coulthurst met in class.

Mr. COULTHURST.—Yes, Sir.

Mr. DIXON.—What kind of class? a Methodist class, or some other?

Mr. COULTHURST.—A Methodist class, to all intents and purposes.

[It may here be observed that Mr. Coulthurst, on his expulsion from office, had been allowed to retain his membership.]

Mr. DIXON.—But who is the leader of that class—yourself, or some one else? and by whom has he been appointed?

Here Mr. Coulthurst stated how the class had been treated with respect to tickets: that after his removal from office the class had continued to meet, in expectation that a new leader would be appointed; but none came; that on repairing to the vestry of Stanhope-street chapel, the Sunday but one following, they found the door locked, which they were informed was done by order of the stewards: that up to that period he (Mr. C.) had not acted as leader, but had held prayer meetings twice, and once asked brother James Tear, the senior member of the class and a local preacher, to lead it, and he wished to know what harm there was in that.

Mr. Dixon said he believed another leader had been appointed, and inquired from the brethren if they knew who he was, and whether he had attended. He further inquired from Mr. Coulthurst whether the class went to the vestry.

Mr. COULTHURST said he had heard, accidentally, late in the week, that after the evening service on the day in which the class had been locked out in the morning, Mr. Marsden announced that the class which had usually met in the upper vestry of that chapel (Stanhope-street) would be met the following Sunday morning by a new leader.

Mr. DIXON said that as brother Coulthurst admitted that the class knew that a leader would be sent, they ought to have met him.

Mr. COULTHURST denied that the class had heard of the appointment, and contended that as they had been locked out, (and he had reason to think it was by high authority,) it was but reasonable that they should be specially informed by the same high authority when and where they should meet.

Mr. DIXON said he had not heard till then any thing about the locking out, and thought it must have been accidental.

Mr. COULTHURST said he could by no means think it an accidental occurrence, for, on applying to Mrs. Ball to know by whose authority the door had been locked, she informed him that she had been ordered so to do by Messrs. Frost and Franceys, who blamed her for not doing the same the preceding Sunday, and enjoined her to continue to lock it until some other arrangement should be determined upon with respect to the class.

Mr. DIXON then said that he thought brother Coulthurst should say whether he intended meeting in a proper Methodist class, whose leader was regularly appointed by the superintendent.

Mr. COULTHURST said that was a question he could not then answer, as it was forestalling the business; that it would be quite soon enough to charge a person with a crime when it had been committed, and that he could not comply with such a test, nor give such a pledge.

Mr. GREY inquired of Mr. Dixon whether there was any law whereby, if a leader had been expelled from office, his name could be erased from the Local Preachers' Plan.

Mr. DIXON said that a leaders' meeting might deem a leader unfit or incompetent to his office, as a leader, without affecting his character as a local preacher.

Mr. COULTHURST.—Sir, as chairman of that meeting by which I was deprived of office, you know that incompetency formed no part of the cause of my expulsion, as you seem to insinuate, but merely allowing Mr. Beynon to meet in my class.

Mr. DIXON admitted that to be the fact, and did not know that he had made use of the word incompetency.

Mr. GREY said that it was absolutely necessary that brother Coulthurst should say whether he would meet in a regular Methodist class, and moved that, if he refused to satisfy the meeting on this point, his name should be omitted from the Plan.

This motion, not being seconded, was lost, of course.

Dr. BURROWS said he thought the request of brother Coulthurst was quite reasonable, considering how both himself and his class had been treated.

Mr. GREY observed that as Dr. Burrows had but just come into the meeting, he was not competent to give an opinion.

Mr. HEALEY said he had been in the meeting all the time, and had come to the same conclusion as Dr. Burrows.

Mr. DIXON said that brother Coulthurst had allowed Mr. Beynon to take two of his appointments, which he had no right to do.

Mr. COULTHURST admitted the fact, and deemed himself perfectly justifiable in what he had done, since Mr. Beynon had not only been expelled from society as a private member, without his case being brought before the leaders' meeting, but his name had also been struck off the Local Preachers' Plan, without the consent of the local preachers' meeting; a circumstance which he thought a reflection on the meeting that submitted to such a violation of law. He considered Mr. Beynon as much a member of that meeting as he had ever been.

Mr. DIXON.—We do not deny the right of private opinion to brother Coulthurst; but he has gone beyond that, having, without authority, acted upon his private opinions, in employing Mr. Beynon to preach for him.

Mr. FULFORD said that Mr. Coulthurst had done something more: he had stated the case of his expulsion to his brethren in the Music-hall. Mr. F. also insinuated that he knew something more.

Mr. COULTHURST observed that if Mr. Fulford had any charge to prefer against him, he had better state particulars, as insinuations would go for nothing, unless they could be substantiated by facts.

Here the business terminated, Messrs. Coulthurst and Tear being kindly permitted to meet in any Methodist class in the circuit that they might think proper; at the same time they were affectionately reminded that should they not comply therewith, from March 23, up to the period when the new Plans were to be made out, their names would be omitted. It was also agreed that the new leader was to inform the class when and where they were to meet; but that has not yet been

done. The names of the following persons are omitted in the new Plan :—James Tear, Sampson Major, Abraham Harrison, Robert Harley, and Wm. Coulthurst. Joseph Lyon, a local preacher and leader, has subsequently returned his Plan and class-book to the superintendent, Mr. George Marsden, being perfectly disgusted with the proceedings in reference to his expelled brethren.

### THE ILLUMINATOR AND THE DRAM-SHOPS.

The racy gusto with which our calumniating contemporary recurs fortnight after fortnight to the "*gin-shop*" evidently proves that he treats the subject *con amore*. The atmosphere of the dram-shop, we presume, is favourable to lucubrations as distinguished for candour as they are for truth. In a strange farrago of nonsense in the last number, in which the low grovelling ideas betray the writer in every line, we are told, "A host of philosophers and philanthropists have demonstrated, ten thousand times over, that the *indiscriminate* retailers of ardent spirits 'murder his Majesty's subjects, and drive them to hell like sheep.' But what do the squires in *gin-palaces* care for that?" &c. Now it is a fact so well known and acknowledged, that even the oblique intellect of this writer cannot distort it, that in direct contravention of an express rule of Mr. Wesley's, the Methodist preachers have for a long series of years, and do still, not only admit into the societies, but promote to offices of trust and responsibility in the church, these "murderers of his Majesty's subjects," nay, even associate with them as their bosom friends. But then it must be remembered these were *orthodox* gin-shops. Blessed by the pious benedictions of a Methodist preacher, the dram-shop became a blessing rather than a curse. So long as the preachers shared in the profits, and were admitted to the hospitalities of bed and board,—so long as the Conference coffers were enriched from the plunder, they might "murder his Majesty's subjects and drive them to hell," or any where else, with impunity, for all that the preachers cared about the matter. But let the dram-seller become a member of the Association,—let him dare to lift up his voice in favour of a reform of abuses, and anon

"A change comes o'er the *spirit* of their dream."

They suddenly discover that a gin-seller who is opposed to them is a son of Belial, a "murderer" of both soul and body; whatever merits they formerly perceived in him are now totally obscured by the one grand blot, worse than all other crimes combined, that of holding liberal opinions. By the bye, did it never occur to the "learned Theban" of the *Illuminator* that if Methodist preachers will drink spirits, there must be persons to sell them? That the preachers, generally speaking, are in the habit of indulging in a cheerful glass of punch is as notorious as the sun at noon-day. Let facts speak. At a quarterly meeting in the Liverpool South Circuit, not a great while since, two official members ventured to suggest the propriety of adhering to and enforcing Mr. Wesley's rule on the subject of spirit drinking, when they were silenced in the most peremptory and summary manner by the preacher. If report speak true, very recently a certain reverend

Man in the South  
Has burnt his mouth,

with something rather stronger than "cold milk porridge," as the nursery rhyme has it. And these are the men who pretend to feel indignant at the idea of any person trafficking or dealing in ardent spirits!! Consistency is utterly out of the question, but one would think that decency ought to have closed their mouths on this subject. We are informed that when the first number of the *Illuminator*, in which this doughty attack on the gin-shops was made, reached the Isle of Man, certain orthodox dram-sellers, the pillars of the church in that quarter, felt so indignant at this attack on their "vested interests," that they had nearly quitted the concern, (not the dram-shops, but the Methodist Society,) in disgust.

These remarks may seem severe; but let it be remembered that, in their own warlike phraseology, "they have thrown down the glove and dared us to the combat:" people who are so fond of cudgel playing must not complain if they get an awkward blow on the scone now and then for their pains.

## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Manchester.*—On Thursday evening, May 7, a meeting was held in the Tabernacle, Stevenson-square, of Sunday-school teachers, and friends to the Sunday-school cause, for the purpose of taking into consideration the case of Mr. Hughes, which was detailed in our last, and of establishing Sunday-schools connected with the Association. The large building was crowded to excess, not less than 2500 persons being present. Dr. Warren presided on the occasion. The meeting opened with singing and prayer, after which Mr. Hughes entered into his case at great length. After Mr. Hughes had concluded, Mr. Bent, the secretary to the Conference schools, rose to explain some circumstances alluded to by Mr. Hughes, and in so doing stated that he bore his most cordial and willing testimony to the long-tried usefulness and high merits of Mr. Hughes, as a Sunday-school conductor, and felt sorry that any steps should have been taken to remove him from a post which he filled with such credit and honour. He was followed by Mr. Greenhalgh, and several other gentlemen, and a handsome collection was made towards the objects of the meeting.

*Liverpool.*—The congregations at the Music-hall continue overflowing. It has, therefore, become absolutely necessary to open other rooms for worship. On Sunday last, a commodious room, Burlington-bridge, Vauxhall-road, was opened for Divine service, when sermons were preached in the afternoon by Mr. A. Harrison, and in the evening by Mr. Wm. Shirley. Collections were made on both occasions towards the expenses incurred in fitting up the room. A Sunday school has also been opened in the same place, which promises to be the means of doing good in that populous neighbourhood.

The Rev. George Marsden, supposing that, as he had got rid of all the turbulent and disaffected members, he could stealthily advance a step farther in the road to absolute power, and rivet another link in the chain of ecclesiastical despotism, actually appointed a young man as leader to a class, who officiated several weeks, and then brought him to the leaders' meeting, and introduced him as an accredited leader, without ever being nominated or proposed to the meeting at all. He had reckoned, however, it appears, without his host; some portion of English spirit was still to be found amongst them, and the result was that

he was pretty well trounced for his audacity, and obliged, if not to reform, at least to conform, to the usage in such cases made and provided. One or two of the leaders in the South Circuit, not in any way identified with the Association, have thrown up their offices in disgust at such proceedings.

*Carlisle.*—The Association in Carlisle are now erecting a Tabernacle in Lowther-street, capable of accommodating about 1000 persons. Dr. Warren is invited to open it on the 28th of June. The following is an extract of a letter:—"The tide of popular feeling is with us, and we are determined not to wait for the shallows; but the best of all is, God is with us. A good feeling pervades our various meetings; the people say they never had such profitable preaching before; so much for plain, homely, *un-collegiate* local preachers. I really think the chirping of the grasshopper will prove too much for the lion of the Conference."

*Isle of Man.*—When the last plan for the preaching came out, it was discovered that Hampton-court, the seat of W. Yates, Esq. (formerly of Manchester,) where preaching had been regularly held, was omitted from the plan altogether, in consequence, it was supposed, of Mr. Yates being suspected of holding liberal sentiments. He immediately came over to Douglas to inquire the cause, but found the superintendent preacher gone to Sheffield. A meeting of the local preachers was directly called, and an arrangement made, signed by all but one individual, to supply the preaching as usual, by voluntary service. It is expected that the next local preachers' meeting will "tell a tale" in reference to this subject. One local preacher has retired in disgust.

*Nantwich.*—We understand that Mr. Bunbury has been expelled by the Rev. Mr. Tabraham, under circumstances of rather an extraordinary nature. A meeting of official characters has been held, at which a protest has been signed, and sent to Mr. Tabraham. We shall be glad if our Nantwich correspondent will send us the particulars of the whole affair.

*Shrewsbury.*—Reform has taken deep root in this part of the country. In Shrewsbury there are about half a dozen persons who advocate the Conference cause. The Christian and gentlemanly conduct of Mr. Allen, the superintendent, who has allowed resolutions expressive of their sentiments



to pass at the quarterly meeting, has hitherto prevented the formation of an Association, but we are authorized to state, that should this gentleman imitate the conduct of his brethren in Liverpool and Manchester, he will have a coach load of Dr. Warrens and Reformers immediately.

*An Anecdote.*—A travelling preacher in a certain circuit, on renewing the quarterly tickets of one of the classes, found that a female member had neglected attendance on the class, and observed,—“Some people will say that if we turn them out of the Methodist society, thank God we cannot turn them out of heaven.” He then, in a very solemn manner, added,—“I don’t know that: there is more in that text of scripture than many people think of, ‘Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’” This assertion was made in the hearing of about twenty persons, from three of whom, and two of them were chapel stewards, I received the account. I had concluded on not publishing it; but finding that the same preacher had made nearly the same observation to another class, still more recently, I thought it a duty I owed to the society and the public, to expose these cruel attempts to distress the minds of sincere and simple-hearted Christians with such dreadful apprehensions. If this is not teaching doctrines subversive of the methodism of Mr. Wesley, I do not know what is. Surely the Conference will, as a body of preachers, protest against such proceedings.—*Robinson’s Observations on the System of Methodism.*

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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*L. S.* suggests to the serious consideration of the editor of the *Calumnist*, whether he cannot coin a few new slanders, as the stock in hand seems to be getting rather stale. The story of the challenge given by Mr. Farrer to Mr. Scarth, and the tale of the theft of *their own money* by the leaders of Leeds-street, are, we imagine, stereotyped from their constant appearance. We beg to suggest an improvement on both stories. Cannot he get up a full, true, and particular account of the trial and transportation of these said leaders? In respect to the first tale, if he cannot give an account of the duel itself, he may surely tell us of the “fiery Tybals” being bound over to keep the peace. This would at least have the merit of novelty, whilst it would be quite as true as the others. In respect to the exclusive honesty which this party claim for themselves, the letter of *Oliver*, which we shall insert in our next, will throw a little light on the subject.

Mr. Greenhalgh’s reply to the mean and disengenuous attempt in the last *Illuminator* to distort the common sense meaning of Dr. Warren’s speech at the Manchester meeting, arrived too late for insertion this week. In the next number it shall have a place.

We beg to inform the editor of the *Illuminator* that the 16th chapter of Numbers was read at the opening of the Music-hall, being considered singularly appropriate, the arrogant pretensions of our Conference to Divine right being not very unlike the ambitious spirit of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with this difference,—the latter sinned against the visible manifestations of the Divine power, the modern levites against the plain and simple injunctions of a new and better covenant. Let our preachers read carefully the 9th and 10th verses of this said chapter. We wonder whether they ever read Jeremiah, chap. xxiii, v. 1, 2, without a shudder?

The second letter of *Theophilus* is unavoidably postponed until our next.

Our St. Helen’s correspondent, *A Friend to Liberty*, if possible in our next.

We hope also to be able to give Mr. Gordon’s fourth letter in our next.

We also acknowledge *Marcus—O. B.—Anon—Verax*—and *A Friend to Methodism* as it was.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 16.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 1835.

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## TO WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

### LETTER IV.

BRETHREN,—There are two rules contained in the Minutes of Conference which have been frequently appealed to as proving that that Conference and its representatives are responsible to the people. To those rules I wish to direct your notice, in proof of an opposite position. That proof is worthy of your serious regard; for nothing can more effectually stamp upon a body of men the character of enemies to liberty, than the fact that their professed grants of liberty carefully guard against the freedom which it is their boasted design to establish.

The first of these rules declares that, if “any new rule be objected to at the first quarterly meeting in any given circuit, and if the major part of that meeting, in conjunction with the preachers, be of opinion that the enforcing of such rule in that circuit will be injurious to the prosperity of that circuit, it shall not be enforced in opposition to the judgment of such quarterly meeting before the second Conference.” One remarkable deficiency of such a rule is, that it does not provide that a new rule shall be *submitted* to the quarterly meetings before it can be adopted by the Conference as law in any shape. The right of the people is one which should prohibit the *making of laws at all* without their *previous approval* of them. So far from granting such a right, the regulation goes on to declare that a quarterly meeting shall not, by publications, public meetings, or *otherwise*, make the new rule a cause of dissension;” that is to say, the co-operation of other circuits in the resistance of an injurious law is not to be sought,—and all opposition to the conduct of the Conference as to its application to the Connexion at large (such being the fair interpretation of “*dissension*”) is to be restrained. Another interference with the just rights of the people rests in the clause of the above quoted regulation, which states that the meeting must act “in conjunction with the preachers.” The opinion of one or two men is thus set up as of equal value with the decisions of the majority of the officers in a circuit; and the circuit cannot exercise the liberty of prohibiting the execution of an injurious law even for a year, unless those of its officers, who are interested in its favour, and who, in all probability, have assisted to pass it, consent to its being put on one side; and this is legislative responsibility! But there is a clause of this deceptive rule which I have not yet quoted, and which still more plainly illustrates the subject of Conferential responsibility:—“But if the rule be confirmed by the second Conference, it shall be binding to the whole connexion.” Indeed! And is there no limitation of circumstances mentioned within which Conference shall not confirm it? None whatever. Can it be confirmed

according to the law, though the majority of quarterly meetings in the kingdom should disapprove of it? Undoubtedly it can. And is this legislative responsibility? So it is called by the defenders of Methodism *as it is*. Such is the kind of responsibility *they* desire. These observations, imperfect as they are, may be sufficient to show that the rule to which they refer does not give to the people any proper check upon the power of the Conference. It is somewhat amusing to find that a defender of Methodism as it is, after quoting the regulation mentioned above for the purpose of rebutting the charge of irresponsibility, fills half a page of his pamphlet with an attempt to show that such a regulation ought not to be applied to such things as theological institutions. Marvellous! If the principle of responsibility be a just one, why ought it not to be applied to all plans which affect the interest of the body?

The other rule to which I alluded as one which had been brought forward to prove that Methodist preachers were responsible to the people, is one which gives to the majority of the trustees, or the majority of the stewards and leaders of any society, the power to summon the preachers of the district, and all the trustees, stewards, and leaders of the circuit, for the purpose of trying any preacher who is accused of immorality, error in doctrine, deficiency of ability, or a breach of certain rules which relate solely to the administration of the sacrament and baptism, and holding service in church hours. Why was this power of summoning to trial confined to those four points? The *general administration of Methodist discipline* is one of the matters with regard to which district meetings, composed of preachers alone, institute an examination in the case of each individual preacher. Why are not the people allowed, according to law, to try a man when he is accused of delinquency with regard to *the same matter*? Why? because *the administration of discipline* is not a point with reference to which our priesthood have any wish to be responsible to the people. The superintendent of the Dudley Circuit has violated the law in the case of a mock trial of me, which he instituted. I may wish to bring him to trial for so doing, according to the rule referred to above. How am I surprised, when I turn to that rule, to find that I cannot do so, because the subjects of offence are confined to four points in which the breach of the law he has violated is not included. But the rule above mentioned goes on to declare that if the accused preacher should be found guilty, the mixed district meeting shall have power to remove him from the circuit, and that when so removed the district committee, composed of preachers alone, shall appoint another preacher in his place. Now, on the supposition that the superintendent of this circuit could, according to rule, be brought to trial before the circuit for this violation of law, the part of the rule just referred to would make the trial of non-effect. The preachers' district committee has *already declared*, after listening to the superintendent's tale, but not hearing the tale of those whom he has aggrieved, that that gentleman has acted *properly*. If, therefore, that committee should appoint his successor, after a mixed district meeting has removed him, the person appointed would be one pledged to carry forward the present superintendent's plans. What would be gained by such a procedure as this? What responsibility to the people can there be given by a rule which thus throws the final arrangement of the matter in dispute into the hands of the preachers alone? Why

did not the rule declare that the mixed district meeting should have power finally to settle the business in hand? Why?—because the preachers are determined not to be responsible to the people. By choosing these two rules, and endeavouring to show that in the cases to which they refer the people have no efficient check upon the conduct of the preachers, I have done more than justice; I have acted mercifully towards those who are opposed to me; for these are, as far as I know, the most liberal regulations by which the subject can be illustrated. To what a pass must men be brought who can cite the *Deed of Declaration* in proof of the accountability of the Conference, a document which does not say one word about the manner in which the *societies are to be governed*,—which refers solely to the regulation of matters concerning *preachers themselves*. What fools a man must think his readers to be who pretends to throw light upon this subject by asserting that the preachers are *responsible to God!* Are not the members of the Association responsible to God?—and does this fact asserted prove one party to be right any more than the other? Such arguments are a clearer illustration of the desperate nature of a bad cause than any reasons which an opponent might advance.

The direct evidence by which this ministerial irresponsibility of the Methodist system may be proved is so plain and full, that I wonder any one can be found to deny the fact. The people are not allowed (except with regard to the distribution of some of the funds of the Connexion—which exception I may afterwards notice in illustration of my general argument) to interfere *personally* with the deliberations of Conference and district meetings; their petitions to the priesthood are shamefully disregarded; and their decisions expressed, under any circumstances, by means of memorial, are declared not to be binding upon the conduct of those who have assumed the mastery over them. No appeal lies to *them* from the decisions of the Conference, of which district committees are the representatives: such decisions are declared to be final, and equally binding upon both preachers and people. The preachers assume to themselves, in the local meetings of the societies, power to stop all proceedings obnoxious to them, by refusing to put motions regularly proposed, and dissolving these meetings at their pleasure. The will of the minister presiding is set up as the law by which those meetings are to be governed, the members of such meetings being only regarded as so many noughts, which derive their value from the unit who is placed at their head; and all the proceedings of the people in their meetings are, moreover, liable to be reversed, by district meetings and Conferences, so that, when a preacher finds himself in a minority, by any chance which the ordinary course of ministerial conduct cannot prevent, he and his minority may take their case for judgment to a court composed of *preachers alone*, who have common prejudices and interests which naturally lead them to judge in favour of the *preacher's* side of the question. I cannot imagine to myself an irresponsibility more complete than that which these statements describe. It is, to a considerable extent, supported by laws which the Conference has passed; but where law does not bear upon the case it is built upon principles of action which are well understood, and almost universally adopted by the rulers of our Israel, and dignified by the name of “usage.”

I am, yours, affectionately,

Dudley, May 27, 1835.

JOHN GORDON.



THE LATE REV. ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.A.S., &c. &c. &c.

The following extract from the Life of Dr. Clarke, edited by his son, the Rev. J. B. B. Clarke, M.A., shows the happy, holy, and flourishing state of the Connexion prior to the nefarious transactions at Leeds, in 1827, in consequence of which one thousand members were sacrificed for the sake of a paltry organ, or rather to enable an ambitious and unprincipled faction to possess themselves of unscriptural, despotic, and irresponsible power.

"In the evening I had a meeting with the preachers, stewards, and several principal friends, together with almost all the leaders, (male and female,) and endeavoured to set them right on many matters on which they had got very uneasy. It was a very solemn and affecting time; and, I believe, all were determined to leave minor matters, and strive together for the hope of the gospel, laying themselves out for the future to be more useful to society at large, and to labour more abundantly to bring sinners to God. On one proposing the question to me, 'Is Methodism now what it has been?' I answered, 'No; it is more rational, more stable, more consistent, more holy, more useful to the community, and a greater blessing to the world at large:' and all this I found no difficulty in proving."—Vol. iii, p. 50.

This conversation took place at Belfast, *June 9th*, 1823, four years previously to the enactment of the Leeds tragedy. To that scandalous blot on the character of Methodism may be traced all the evils now existing throughout the Connexion, and which will continue to exist and increase until the people simultaneously exert themselves to regain their spiritual rights and independence. If Dr. Clarke were yet alive, to witness the thousands of illegal expulsions and acts of tyranny daily occurring, and the question were now put to him, "Is Methodism what it has been, *or ought to be*?" how widely different would be the indignant answer of that great and good man!

"The introduction of organs into Methodist chapels," says his biographer, "was an innovation on the original simplicity of the Methodist public worship to which Dr. Clarke ever objected, and which, in his opinion, amounted to a positive evil, when introduced contrary to the wishes of the generality of the congregations assembling in such chapels."—Vol. iii, p. 168.

And in a letter to his friend, Mr. Stephen Brunskill, dated *Haydon Hall*, Feb. 20, 1828, about twelve months after the unhappy Leeds case, the Doctor himself says:—

"The church of Christ is never much hurt by the persecutions which come from the wicked; but when the church persecutes the church, then is desolation. The subject of the introduction of organs into Methodist chapels, and forced subscriptions to inexplicable doctrines, are at present rending the church of Christ, and scattering the flock. Perhaps *God will not permit these things to go much farther.* \* \* \* \* Though these things pain me, yet do they not move me; the *foundation* still standeth strong."—Vol. iii, p. 168.

The following is part of Dr. Clarke's commentary on 1 Chronicles, xvi, 42:—

"*Query*, Did God ever ordain *instruments of music* to be used in his worship? Can they be used in *Christian assemblies* according to the spirit of Christianity? Has Jesus Christ, or his apostles, ever commanded or sanctioned the use of them? Were they ever used any where in the *apostolic church*? Does the use of them at present, in Christian congregations, ever increase the spirit of devotion? Does it ever appear that *bands of musicians*, either in their *collective* or *individual* capacity, are *more spiritual*, or *as spiritual*, as the other parts of the church of Christ? Is there less pride, self-will, stubbornness, insubordination, lightness, and frivolity, among such persons, than among the other professors of Christianity found in the same religious society? Is it ever remarked or known that musicians in the house of God have attained to any depth of piety, or superior soundness of understanding, in the things of God? Is it ever found that those churches and Christian societies which have and use instruments of music in divine worship are *more holy*, or *as holy*, as those societies which do not use them? And is it always found that

the *ministers* who affect and recommend them to be used in the worship of almighty God, are the most spiritual and useful preachers? Can mere *sounds*, no matter how melodious, where no *word* nor *sentiment* is or can be uttered, be considered as giving praise to God? Is it possible that *pipes* or *strings* of any kind can give God praise? Can God be pleased with sounds which are emitted by no *sentient* being, and have in themselves *no meaning*? If these questions cannot be answered in the affirmative, then, *query*, Is not the introduction of such instruments into the worship of God antichristian, and calculated to debase and ultimately ruin the spirit and influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ? And should not all who wish well to the spread and establishment of pure and undefiled religion lift up their hand, their influence, and their voice against them? The argument from their use in the *Jewish* service is futile in the extreme when applied to *Christianity*."

Whatever may be the sentiments of the reader as to the propriety of using musical instruments in the public worship of God, no difference of opinion can exist as to the impudence, folly, and barbarity of forcing, by the self-created authority of the preachers in 1827, an organ into Brunswick Chapel, Leeds contrary to the wishes of the congregation, as expressed through the leaders, and in open violation of the laws of the Connexion. By these lawless and tyrannical proceedings, sanctioned by Conference, about one thousand members were lost to the society. It was in speaking of this most unprovoked infringement of the constitution, and the deliberate reassumption by the Conference, in 1828, of those antichristian and unreasonable powers of which they had so solemnly divested themselves in 1797, that Dr. Clarke, in language not too strong for the occasion, said to his friends in Birmingham, as mentioned in a former number of the *Lantern*, "*The Conference have done the Devil's work, just as the Devil wished.*"

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## PROCEEDINGS AT DUDLEY.

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### CONDUCT OF THE REV. T. EDWARDS, SUPERINTENDENT, TOWARDS MR. J. GORDON.

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We are indebted to the *Christian Advocate* for the following report of Mr. John Gordon's speech, at the tea party, in the Tabernacle, Manchester, at the late meeting of Delegates; and gladly seize this opportunity of paying our tribute of respect, in common with all Friends of religious liberty, to the spirited exertions of its independent and indefatigable editors. Convinced that all genuine Methodists will use their utmost endeavours to promote the circulation of this valuable newspaper, and increase the number of its advertisements, we hope the time is not far distant when the great body of Wesleyans will have occasion to express their obligations to the Messrs. Stephens in a manner still more substantial and gratifying. After the first party had taken tea, Mr. J. GORDON, from Dudley, was introduced, and received with enthusiastic cheers. He addressed the meeting nearly in the following terms:

"I congratulate you, my dear Christian friends, on our present meeting. Such an assembly I never saw before, nor was my heart ever so affected as it has been since I entered this place. (Hear, hear.) The principles of this Association are those of righteousness and truth. Its object is to take the power out of the hands of those who are aiming to exert it to the greatest possible extent; and to carry out the principle of *popular interference* to all the subjects to which it ought to apply. (Hear, and cheers.) You have felt the influence of the power to which I have adverted; and I can furnish you with a new instance in reference to *myself*, and a friend who is present with me. (Hear, hear.) In consequence of the part which I have taken in opposing the unjust power of the Conference, I have made myself very obnoxious to certain individuals. Dudley has been said to be one of the most corrupt circuits in the Connexion. Mr. Grindrod never said any thing more true than when he made that statement. (Laughter.) In Dudley circuit we can bring the public voice to bear on the questions which are, now agitated in

the Connexion. (Cheers.) At our last quarterly meeting we asserted the authority of that meeting, and determined to discuss the merits of the Theological Institution. (Cheers.) The first resolution I had the honour of attempting to propose. Mr. Edwards, the superintendent, declared that I should not speak at all. I replied, that I certainly should speak, as long as the meeting thought proper to hear me. (Cries of "That was right!") You will please to observe, that Mr. Edwards had received no money. (Laughter, and much cheering.) He dissolved the meeting, exclaiming, "All you who are for Methodism, *as it is*, come along with me!" He took with him about twelve persons, and left seventy or eighty behind him. (Cheers.) The persons who were left behind proceeded to pass the resolutions which had been prepared. They reprobated the Theological Institution in strong terms; and declared that they would send no preacher to that Institution, nor receive any preacher from it. (Cheers.) The passing of those resolutions caused strong indignation in the minds of the preachers, and that indignation has been poured out upon me, and upon my friend who is present with me. (Cries of "Shame, shame!") Mr. Edwards waited upon me on the Saturday, and said, that he wished to have some conversation with me as to what course of conduct I intended to pursue. I said, that depended upon the conduct *he* meant to pursue. If he wanted a pledge from me, I assured him that I would give him none. He asked me if there was any hope that my opposition to him and to Methodism would cease? That also, I told him, depended upon his conduct. He then said, that, on the following Monday, two charges would be preferred against me, at a meeting of the trustees, stewards, and leaders. Mr. Frankland, his colleague, would prefer one, and Mr. Robert Wood, of Leeds, the other. I asked him if Mr. Wood was to be present. "No;" he replied, "but he *had* sent a letter." The two charges were:—first, that I had attended a meeting for the purpose of proposing Methodist reform, at Dudley; and, secondly, that I had attended a meeting for a similar purpose, in the Music-hall, at Leeds. I said, that no rule of Methodism had been broken; and asked him if he intended to try me as a local preacher. My friend, Mr. Slocombe, was present with me, and Mr. Edwards proceeded in the same manner towards him. I mention the conduct which was pursued on this occasion thus particularly, because we elicited a principle which we deem of great importance. We knew that he would try to prove that we were present at such meetings; and we knew that if we let him go on in the way which was usually done by the preachers, that he would have shown of justice. We said, that if Mr. Edwards declared any individuals expelled, it should be entirely on his own responsibility: the meeting shall take no part in his acts. (Hear.) After preaching by Mr. Frankland, the meeting was to take place.

We have heard of a *mob*; and it is said that we get *mobs* to aid us; but on this occasion some of the most respectable persons in the place were present, including some Dissenting Ministers. (Hear.) The fact was, that the conduct of Mr. Edwards was regarded as an outrage upon public decency, and many persons determined to make a stand against such a display of spiritual tyranny. (Cheering.) Well; we got into the vestry: the passage is narrow, and there was a great rush, so that the door was forced back, and could not be shut. Mr. Edwards has much brute courage; but on this occasion he looked very foolish. "I shan't conduct the business of this meeting till that door is closed," said he. "You had better close it yourself, Sir," said some persons near it. At last, we took pity upon him, and made an attempt to close the door; and after some considerable efforts we succeeded. I told the people to wait in the chapel, and that when the trial was over I would come into the pulpit and state the result. (Much laughter and cheering.) Mr. Edwards said, "You ought to have told the people to go home." I replied, that if he would mind his business I would mind mine. Mr. Edwards made preparations to give out a hymn. This was resisted by several persons; they earnestly entreated him not to commit the mockery of singing and prayer on such an occasion. At length he did. He then said, that it was with considerable reluctance that he had adopted that mode of proceeding; "but you stop me *in my work*," said he, "*I cannot make any of my collections!*" "Oh, then, that is your *work*; is it?" said I. (Laughter and cheering.) He did not complain that he had been prevented from preaching, or aiming to do good, but that he had been prevented from making his collections. He said that he had very seriously considered the subject, and that the conduct of Mr. John Gordon was highly improper. I said that I was not going to allow such a mode of proceeding as that. He replied, that *he* was not my accuser; and added, that *he* would bring no more accusations against me. He had consulted his colleague

and they had felt it their duty to act as they had done. I said that the former statement was bad enough, but that this was worse. It was abominable that he, who was to sit as the judge, should be found plotting with the accuser! He seemed utterly astonished that any person should have found that out; and appeared to regard all that had been done as fair and proper Methodism. Some person said, "Sir, will you please to say what we are come here for?" "You are come," said he, "to try Mr. Gordon and Mr. Slocombe: I suppose that's all right, is it not?" "No," said I, "it is not *all* right: if the trial proceeds, will you permit *the majority* to decide as to the crime, and as to the degree of punishment due to me?" After some silence, he answered, "I shall act according to Methodism." I said, "You have not answered the question;" and I put it again. He observed, "I shall answer something to the meeting." "But will that something be whether I am criminal, and what is to be the nature of my punishment?" He returned no further answer, and I threw myself on the candour of the meeting.

An information, I told them, had been prepared against me, and the judge declared plainly, that he had plotted and contrived with the accuser. Just before he had said that I *deserved to be expelled*; and now he declared that *he*, and *not the meeting*, should determine *whether I was guilty*, and *what punishment I deserved*! "If he does this," said I, "I throw myself upon the meeting; but if not, I require that some one shall be put in the chair who will do me justice." As to what was contained in Mr. Wood's letter, I maintained that to be no charge at all. It was then determined that Mr. Lester, a gentleman of great determination of character, should go into the chair. He took his station opposite to Mr. Edwards, and said, "Now, Sir, I am chairman, and shall keep you in order, as well as the rest. Mr. Frankland, bring your charges." (Much laughter and cheering.) Mr. Frankland began by explaining the system and laws of Methodism. "I can only receive you in the character of an accuser," said the chairman; "if you declare that at the end of your speech you mean to bring your charges, you may speak as long as you like." He hesitated; and this placed him very much in the light of a rogue! "What," said one who was present, "you were quite willing to prefer your charges when the individual with whom you concocted those charges was to preside as the judge; but you are not willing to do so now that the meeting is duly formed and the majority are to decide! Is that Methodism? Is that Christianity?" (Repeated cheers.) I never saw two men placed in such a pitiable situation, and hope I never shall again.

Some curious things came out in the course of the meeting. "Why can't you let us go on with our work?" said Mr. Edwards. "You know that you can bring me before a district meeting, if I have done wrong." Mr. Edwards is not remarkably bright; though I believe him to be an honest man; at least, as honest as he can be under the present system. (Laughter.) He often commits himself, as he did on this memorable occasion. "Well," said I, "this is very strange. Suppose I am in the market-place, and a man puts his hand into my pocket. I don't much like him to do that, and I say, 'My friend, it will be a great accommodation to me if you will let me alone, and take your hand out of my pocket.' He replies, 'O pray, Sir, don't say a word about that; can't you let me go on with my work in my own way? Let me keep my hand in your pocket, and do as I please. You know that there is the Town-hall yonder; and my brother is the magistrate! You can bring me before him, you know, whenever you please!'" (Great laughter.) This threw my gentleman rather off his pins; but at length he said, "Oh, but you must submit, if the man was too strong for you!" (Hear, hear.) "Yes!" I rejoined; "that is just the case with you preachers. You are just like highwaymen! If you can bring me down alone, you will; but if not, you call in two or three more of your companions, and then you may rob and murder me. That is just what the majority of you are!" He lifted up his eyes with astonishment, and brought to my mind what is said in the *Watchman's Lantern* about "brute force." (Cheers.) The crowd was all this time pressing towards the vestry. The chairman said, "We have waited a long time, Mr. Frankland; and if you do not prefer your charges I shall request you to leave the room." "Surely you will not do so," said Mr. Frankland, evidently alarmed. "Mr. Frankland, I order you to stop here," exclaimed Mr. Edwards. Mr. Frankland seemed more frightened, and said, "Well, I will go out, if any person will lead me by the hand." There was a thick, stout, round-faced, large-eyed, rough-looking man, sitting near, with fists as big as sledge-hammers. Mr. Frankland looked to him, and said, "Brother Evans, you lead me through the crowd!" He was thus led through, as a little child, receiving some personal indignities, which I was sorry for; but which, however, did him no physical or moral injury.



A portion of the crowd then rushed in. All this time Mr. Edwards sat alone, at the head of the table. At length I said, "I know that you have got orders to expel me; all that I want to do is to make you utter it on your own responsibility." Well, he sat for nearly three-quarters of an hour, rubbing his forehead, and looking at the table, one and another person making observations, and calling him all things indifferent. After some time, a gentleman got up and said, "As the charge has not been preferred against these gentlemen, I presume they are not guilty;" and it was then proposed that a vote of censure should be passed on Messrs. Edwards and Frankland! (Hear, hear.) Mr. Edwards then got up and said, "I consider Mr. Gordon and Mr. Slocombe suspended, till they submit to what I conceive to be a proper mode of trial." I said that I had not objected to trial: it was the people present who had objected to it: he should have suspended the meeting, therefore, and not me. At this time I suppose that there were about a thousand people in the chapel, and it was near eleven o'clock! It was then moved by some person in the gallery that the meeting should express its approbation of my general conduct, as well as of that of Mr. Slocombe. (Cheers.) The result was most striking.

A meeting of the whole circuit was called on the following Friday, at which about one hundred and fifty persons were present, the great majority of whom were officers. It was thought that the circuit was brought into very singular circumstances, and that its spiritual interests were likely to be injured by such unrighteous conduct on the part of those to whom those interests were entrusted. Some explanation, it was suggested, should take place with Mr. Edwards: he should be asked if he still thought us guilty, or if he was willing to restore us to our places. We held a meeting for prayer, while a deputation waited upon Mr. Edwards. It was proposed to him that the preachers should proceed in the discharge of their usual ministerial duties till the Conference—provided he took off our censure; and it was promised also, by persons who certainly had no right to do so, that, if he thus took off the censure, we should not oppose him. He refused to accede to their propositions. The meeting then proposed a resolution, *that the circuit, from that moment, should WITHHOLD ALL SUPPORT from Mr. Edwards and Mr. Frankland!* (Hear, hear, hear.) We have since met the classes regularly, and the money that is collected will be devoted to the trustees, who are placed in awful circumstances. Some individuals who had left the society in disgust have come back and paid up their arrears. (Cheers.) We told Mr. Edwards that we should not place ourselves under the lash of the law by interfering with the chapels, especially as we hoped soon to get one or two chapels for ourselves. It was intimated that many persons would leave their accustomed places of worship and go to the Dissenters. We thought it dangerous to get the societies scattered, and we endeavoured, therefore, to arrange plans to prevent it. It happened on the following Sunday that a local preacher was planned to one of the chapels, and he preached to a crowded congregation. In the other chapel Mr. Edwards preached, and had about twenty or thirty persons to hear him! (Hear, hear.) But oh, he boasts of what he has done! He stood in the chapel-yard, and, as some of the people expressed their indignation, he said to one of them, "Now I am in my glory!" (Loud cries of "Shame, shame!") He said that he would continue to preach if he had but three individuals to hear him! And yet he was the minister of that people! (hear) sent to watch over their spiritual interests! And he would go to the house of God, from which by his conduct he had driven them; and he could sing, and pray, and read the word of God, and then stand forth and glory in such things! (Much disapprobation.) Oh, brethren, these are things most awful! things that we should never forget! things which constitute a breach of the principles of justice between man and man! (Hear, hear.) Talk of Methodism, and of rules! Oh, it is most awful! It is a consolation to remark that we are well able to provide for the wants of the people. I preached in the Presbyterian chapel, and I think I never saw a place so crammed. I believe there were not twenty persons connected with the Methodist society in Dudley who did not attempt to get in. (Cheers.) Such is the state to which the preacher has brought the circuit over the spiritual interests of which he was placed. (Hear, and "Shame.") On one occasion Mr. Edwards played us a trick; he put up Mr. Rowe to preach, of whom I must say, that throughout the whole of this painful business his conduct has been exemplary; and he obtained a large congregation, while Mr. Edwards himself preached to about twenty.

[Mr. Gordon's address was listened to throughout with intense interest, and at its conclusion he was cheered for a considerable time.]

## DIVISION, OR NO DIVISION, "THAT IS THE QUESTION."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—*"There is a division, there must be a division, there shall be a division,"* so say the most violent of the aristocratic faction and some of the preachers, particularly that wholesale and "*con amore*" excommunicator, the Rev. Samuel Jackson, *"There is not a division, there need be no division, there shall be no division,"* say the leaders of the Association.

I believe both parties mean what they say, and give proof of their sincerity by their deeds; thus the preachers are doing all in their power to make their assertion good, and having first made the wound, they are doing all they can to irritate and inflame it; hence their reckless expulsions of all who cannot go the full length of their high church principles; hence their volleys of abuse from that sacred place the pulpit; hence their denying to Christian men the tokens of the love of their dying Lord; hence their closing the doors of the lovefeast to them; hence their repeated avowals of a determination never to condescend from their self-exaltation to reason with, and, if possible, reclaim their, so called, "erring sheep;" and hence their perpetual slanders in that oracle of orthodoxy, the *Illuminator*! On this point, then, the preachers are entitled to the praise of consistency: having resolved on a division, they proceed to the work in a spirit of bold determination; having marked out their victims they at once enter on the business of extermination: here is no squeamish hesitation, no appearance of the lurking remains of pity or compassion, no discovering of the trembling relentings of the spiritual parent, no evidence of the admixture of the "milk of human kindness," but, "like a stanch murderer steady to his purpose," they urge on their cruel course, and leave behind them nothing but the sighs of the wounded spirit, the outcries of injured innocence, and the scarcely heard remonstrances of their few remaining friends.

A division!—to be sure there shall be a division, if they can make it; and if the means they use are not sufficient, it will be because of the superior skill of their opponents in preventing it, and because of the love of the Methodist people to that system of sound doctrine and wholesome discipline which the preachers are labouring to destroy.

The leaders of the Association say, on the contrary, "There shall not be a division," and I claim, Sir, for them credit for as much sincerity as I do for the preachers in carrying out their principle. *Adhesion to the body is the first principle of the Association.* Accordingly we find that none of the leaders withdrew voluntarily; they clung to it till they were forcibly cut off. When so cut off, they showed their love to the system by adhering still to their classes, and keeping their members together in the hope of better times. When a number of class leaders was expelled, they kept up the system, and showed their attachment to it by meeting together weekly as a leaders' meeting. When the prayer leaders and Sunday-school teachers were expelled, they, too, abode still by their own work, and continued to carry on their operations against the kingdom of darkness.

When the local preachers were expelled, did they wrap up their talent in a napkin, and hide it in the earth, because the ecclesiastical lords had cast mire upon it? No; they came nobly forward and employed that talent in the service of the Giver of it, by feeding the scattered flock of those hireling shepherds, who, instead of feeding the sheep, evidenced a love only for their wool!

The fidelity of the leaders of the Association to this principle of adhesion to the body appears also in the character of the arrangements they have made for keeping together the people and preserving them to Methodism. *Those arrangements are all of a temporary nature*, such as the emergency of the case imperatively

required, but such also as can at any moment be relinquished, when there is a prospect of a reconciliation with the Conference. Witness the chapel they have built in Manchester,—it is of boards only,—and the ground on which it stands is taken only for six months. That now building in Carlisle is on the same plan. Witness their society tickets; they are a *fac-simile* of those of the Conference, in order that even in appearance there shall be no more difference than cannot be avoided! Witness, in short, all their acts, which have but one voice, and that is, “there is no division, there need no division, there shall be no division!”

If then, after all that the Association has done or can do to prevent a division, one should unhappily be the termination of the present disputes, on whom, I ask, is the guilt chargeable, if guilt there be? Let the motto and the conduct of the Conference party, which I here hold up to public animadversion, give the answer.

The Conference party have declared in favour of a division;—what can have produced the infatuation which has dictated such a course I shall not stop to inquire;—I mention the fact, and your readers may draw their own conclusions, but do not suffer these divisions and destroyers of the Lord’s people to saddle the awful responsibility on other shoulders.—I am, yours, &c. P.

#### MIS-STATEMENTS OF THE ILLUMINATOR, &c.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN’S LANTERN.

SIR,—A halfpenny publication has just appeared from the Conference party entitled “Dr. Warren and the Association unmasked,” which, as parties implicated, it becomes our duty to notice. Certainly a more disingenuous and unprincipled attempt at misrepresentation has seldom been made, and when the public are rightly informed they will consign the “vile trash” to the infamy which it merits. Dr. Warren and the Association are therein represented as persons wishful to “abolish Methodism, or lay it in ruins,” whereas if any unprejudiced individual will examine *these words in their connexion* he will see that the Doctor is proving that lay delegation may be introduced into district meetings and into Conference without “abolishing Methodism, or laying it in ruins.” I am aware that, as Methodism is now constituted, there are difficulties in the way of attaining this important and scriptural object, and some of them of a legal character, yet these difficulties are not insuperable. The entire speech not only exhibits the maligned and injured Doctor as the warm and consistent friend of genuine Methodism, but the determined and intrepid enemy of those ruinous innovations upon it which its real foes are attempting. We appeal to the delegates and spectators who were present on the memorable occasion, for a refutation of this “vile slander,” and we solemnly remind its authors, together with all who countenance the *Illuminator*, into which it has been copied, that they are deliberately breaking that command of Almighty God, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.” Surely a cause which allows and requires such iniquitous assistance, will speedily come to nought. May God forgive them, for they know not what they do!

In the last week’s *Illuminator* I am spoken of as a man who has recommended the stoppage of missionary supplies. In all fairness the author should have assigned my reason for such recommendation. This reason is the following. The Conference have united the Institution and the missionary cause together, and it is impossible to encourage the latter without countenancing the former. How then could I, or any other individual who conscientiously disapproves of the Institution, consistently contribute to the missionary fund? Besides, as the great body of our Connexion are friends to missions, their continued efforts and liberalities on their behalf would have been regarded as an expression of their approval of the Institution; and, consequently, their suspension of missionary efforts and liberalities as an expression of disapprobation. In no other way were we allowed to tell our opinion; and silence, when Methodism was at stake, would have been criminal. I and my friends reluctantly availed ourselves of the only liberty we had left, wisely concluding that temporary pecuniary embarrassment was better than the entire demolition of a system with which God designs to bless the world.

Yours, &c.

Manchester, May 16, 1835.

J. GREENHALGH.

## PROCEEDINGS IN BIRMINGHAM.

### SUSPENSION OF MR. W. M. COLE, A LOCAL PREACHER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—From the part which I was seen taking in the meeting at Bond-street it was suspected that I was one of the party concerned in getting up that meeting; I was marked, therefore, as the first object of vengeance. On Wednesday, April 22d, the leaders' meeting appointed a deputation to wait upon me. Tuesday, 28th, that deputation, consisting of Mr. Standby and Mr. Clive, called. "They were come to have a little friendly conversation with me; wished to know whether I was for them or against them;" and informed me that the leaders' meeting had given it as their opinion, that I could not be a member of the Society and a member of the Association; and advised me to come to the leaders' meeting the next night to say what my intentions were. I, of course, asked whether there was any charge against me, and what was its nature. "Oh," said one of them, "there is no charge, you are not summoned on any charge." Under these circumstances I refused to attend; and, moreover, informed them, that as I was a local preacher, I did not acknowledge the leaders' meeting as being the proper court for me. My leader gave me to understand that he was opposed to me, that he should not suffer me to meet in his class, that I was an enemy to Methodism, and had, in fact, left the Society. I told him I was no enemy to Methodism, that I was a member of the Society, and did not intend to leave it; when he declared, "Then we'll force you to leave it;" and intimated that the leaders would expel me whether I came to the meeting or not. I told him they might do so if they pleased, but all the world should know it if they did. The next night the leaders' meeting "suspended me for contempt of court," although I had not been summoned to appear before that meeting on any charge whatever.

A second deputation was appointed by this meeting to wait upon me, to know whether I was willing to withdraw from the Association, it being taken for granted that I was a member, for I had not yet admitted it. Mr. Waterhouse, the superintendent preacher, was one of this deputation. He affirmed that by joining the Association I had expelled myself, inasmuch as the Association was a separate society. I denied it. He asserted that he had gathered it from their own publications. When I asked him to refer me to any work in proof of this assertion, he did not attempt to give me that reference. If Mr. Waterhouse could have proved to me that division was the object or intention of your Association, I would neither support nor defend that Association. I have been a Wesleyan Methodist twenty years, and a Wesleyan Methodist I mean to remain, spite of "We'll force you to leave it."

On the following Monday I went to my class to see whether my leader would give practical proof that he was sincere in telling me that I should not meet with him. He did not speak to me till the class was over, and then I was treated in a most ungentlemanly and unchristianlike manner;—was told I had lost my religion, was seeking to destroy Methodism, and a variety of epithets of the most opprobrious nature were applied to me by this man, who professes to watch over souls as one that must give account.

On Sunday evening, May 17th, I had an appointment in one of the town chapels, and as I had not received notice from the secretary of the local preachers' meeting that my appointment had been supplied, I, of course, thought it my duty to go; but, to my astonishment, when I arrived at the place, ten minutes before the time, there was another local preacher in the pulpit; the service had commenced, and the road to the pulpit was lined with trustees.

I think it quite unnecessary for me to make any comment on the above facts; they will speak for themselves. I would, however, inquire, if it were true that I had expelled myself by joining the Association, how comes it to pass that the leaders' meeting should give themselves the trouble to suspend me after I had thus expelled myself?—Yours, &c.

W. M. COLE.

Birmingham, May 28, 1835.

Hitherto we have seen, since the death of Mr. Wesley, the most perfect aristocracy existing, perhaps, upon earth. The people have *no* power, we *the whole*, in the fullest sense which can be conceived.—*Dr. Coke.*



# SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Saml. Drew.*—To a Wesleyan preacher, who thought himself harshly treated by some of his official brethren on a particular occasion, Mr. Drew said, "It is to me astonishing that when persons get into office, they should forget that those whom they direct have the common feelings of human nature, and that elevation is only an accidental circumstance. This is one branch of that range of rocks on which, I fear, Methodism will one day be wrecked."—*Life of Drew, by his Son*, p. 520.

*Lord John Russell.*—Although his Lordship knew too little to be correct on every point in Methodism, he knew too much, and expressed too much, to be easily forgiven. Dr. Southey, indeed, pronounced Methodism to be *imperium in imperio*; but he did not particularly explain himself. The Noble Lord, however, as became an historian, spake out and declared,—"Could the Methodists be invested, by some revolution, with the absolute power which Rome once possessed, there is reason to fear that, unless checked by the genius of a more humane age, the Conference would equal Rome itself in the spirit of persecution."

*Durham.*—At the missionary meeting held here last month a ludicrous incident occurred which excited an extraordinary sensation at the time. Mr. Waddy having addressed the audience in a comparatively mild strain, Mr. Alder commenced a furious attack on the system of stopping the supplies, and denounced awful judgments on the hardened sinners who dared to adhere to it. He then called upon any of the congregation to mount the platform and disprove what he had said, at the same time using the following figure,—"Behold the tombstone of the laborious Barnabas Shaw and his wife, on which is recorded 'Here lie the remains of Barnabas Shaw and his amiable wife, who, notwithstanding the many years they spent in publishing salvation to the heathen, were starved to death in consequence of a stoppage of the supplies!'" The orator forgot to acknowledge it was the dominant faction's own fault, and said not a syllable about the grievances which induced the people to adopt this measure, and which, the preachers may rest assured, will be *universally* practised, unless Conference speedily redress what is so justly complained of. Some of the audience, not having had the advantage

of a theological education, understood the preacher literally, and, of course, lost no time in circulating a report through the city of this dreadful catastrophe, as a fact which they had heard on the best authority. Mr. Squance was even more violent than Mr. Alder on the subject of supplies. Mr. John Bramwell, solicitor, (son of the late pious Bramwell,) suffered the collection to be made, then quietly stepped upon the platform, and addressed the meeting in an excellent speech, in which he completely dissected and exposed the absurd declamation of the preachers. Having shown the folly and impropriety of their using such language, Mr. Squance and his brethren were reduced to the necessity of apologizing, but in doing so they unwittingly fell into their former error; on which Mr. Bramwell said, with great animation, amid the cheers of the congregation, "Did you not see that if I had moved a vote of censure I could have carried it against you by a large majority?" We hope this lesson will not be lost upon the preachers.

*Gateshead.*—The missionary meeting was held here on Monday the 18th ult., and was honoured by the presence of the President of Conference. The sagacious chairman, to the surprise of the audience, made the following extraordinary assertion,—"I believe it will not be without its use to inform the meeting that in the Newcastle district, since 1815, about £27,000 have been collected; all this money passed through my hands, and I can vouch for it before any man, that *not one shilling of it has been misapplied!*" It is very remarkable that at all missionary meetings not a whisper is breathed as to the sums of from £5 to £50 given by rich individuals to make up the deficiency arising from the present supineness of the congregations in general. Every one knows, and none better than the preachers themselves, that the amount, great or small, of missionary collections, has nothing in the world to do with the questions at issue between the Conference and the Association; yet the preachers invariably, but unsuccessfully, endeavour to persuade their hearers to the contrary, probably on the novel moral principle on which they *always say one thing and mean another* in all matters of expulsion. When it is thought convenient to expel an unoffending member, the cause assigned is never the *true* one!

*Dudley.*—The people are getting on gloriously here, the system of lecturing having been found to answer most admirably. A special district meeting is called for next week; the expelled and their friends mean to keep together, to conduct all the business of the circuit at the proper time and places, declaring that they are still in possession of their offices, and disregard all the angry fulminations of their opponents, a mode of proceeding that will sadly perplex them. If it be shown that a district meeting may assemble, and that all its acts shall be a nullity, the people will teach the Connexion a lesson worth its learning. "The preachers," says a correspondent, "shall either forsake us and leave the property in our hands, or the affairs of the circuit shall be conducted under their superintendence in our way. Their maxim is 'Divide and destroy,'—ours shall be 'Union and victory.' The power which can nullify the decisions of a district meeting, can do the same with regard to the Conference."

*Ruabon.*—There are several chapels erected in this circuit since 1795, and 1797, the majority of the trustees of which are friends of the Association, and intend to make legal claim to the chapels which the Conference party occupy, in consequence of the great bulk of the congregations having been driven away by the arbitrary conduct of the superintendent. The people will not hear the travelling preachers, and it is hard for them thus to suffer if they have a legal claim to the chapels, to the building of which they so largely contributed. A few days since there was preaching in the street in Overton to several hundreds of serious and attentive hearers, while only *three* individuals attended the Conference preacher at the chapel in the afternoon, which so discouraged his reverence that he would not try in the evening, and returned to Wrexham. We are going on very favourably for the good cause; our opponents are driven to desperation; every act of theirs injures their own cause and advances ours.

*Darlington.*—Dr. Warren delivered a lecture in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, at seven in the evening of the 28th ult. which was crowded to excess. Mr. C. Parker and Mr. Emmett attended him in the pulpit, and both spoke at considerable length. A better meeting was never witnessed; the collection amounted to upwards of £11, besides £1 sent from Stockton. A public breakfast was given in the morning, of which the Doctor and thirty-three of his friends partook; Mr. R. Parker in the chair.

After the chairman had delivered an excellent speech, the Doctor, Messrs. E. Parker, Emmett, and several others followed. The meeting broke up between twelve and one o'clock. Darlington has become a branch association, and is all alive. Mr. Emmett has received from Mr. Sumner, his superintendent, a list of charges to be preferred against him at a special district meeting to be held immediately, at which he is ordered to appear; he is in high spirits, and well prepared for the event. Mr. Emmett is at the head of the reformers in Yarm and Stockton, to whom he read the charges, and exhorted them all to be firm, and live to God. The Doctor's lecture has produced a wonderful effect in Darlington, and caused some of the preachers' stanch friends to change sides.

*Whitehaven.*—No missionary meeting has yet been held in this town. The superintendent, Mr. Catterick, with "some few followers of his own," had privately arranged preliminaries, and engaged the minister of the Independent chapel to preach the preparatory sermon, without consulting the Missionary Committee. The fact being at length announced, in posting bills, and notices from the pulpits of other chapels, the committee waited upon the Independent minister, who, after an explanation of the circumstances, withdrew his offer to preach. In the meantime, the trustees had it announced by a local preacher, from the pulpit, that no missionary meeting would be held in the Methodist chapel. It was whispered that the deputation had fallen sick at Carlisle. The truth is, the trustees and people are almost unanimously opposed to the establishment of a new form of Popery, and are determined to resist to the utmost the tyranny of the preachers. The chapel is not settled on the Conference plan, and the trustees care as little for the dominant faction as for the President's gagging circular. An attempt was formerly made by Mr. Hall to place it under the control of Conference, but it was defeated chiefly through the judicious advice of Mr. Anderson. Dr. Warren is shortly expected to preach in the chapel, having obtained permission from the trustees. It has been intimated to the preachers, that, if Conference do not comply with the reasonable wishes of the people, they may spare themselves the trouble of returning to Whitehaven, as no supplies whatever will be granted. The local preachers here are superior to the general run of itinerant preachers, and are perfectly competent to manage the circuit without them.

*Barnard Castle.*—A report having been widely circulated here that the people had intimated their intention to prevent Mr. Robert Newton from speaking at the missionary meeting, on the 22nd ult. in consequence of his electioneering exploits in Devonshire, the bellman was sent round the town with a handful of printed papers, of which the following is a copy:

"The substance of a short conversation betwixt a Barnard Castle gentleman and the Rev. R. Newton, last Wednesday evening:—

*Gent.*—"Pray, Sir, have you been in Devonshire lately?"

*Newton.*—"Yes, Sir, I have been attending missionary meetings there. Have you heard the report respecting me?"

*Gent.*—"I have, Sir. Pray do tell me how the matter stands?"

*Newton.*—"The truth is, I was not in Devonshire until AFTER the election was over. The whole talk about me is as BASE A FABRICATION as ever issued from the father of lies. THERE IS NOT A PARTICLE OF TRUTH IN IT."

*Barnard Castle, 22nd May, 1835.*

"Henry Atkinson, Printer and Binder, Market-place, Barnard Castle."

Mr. Newton does not say what he and Mr. Bunting did to the prejudice of Lord John Russell, *before* the election, and *where*.

The principles of the Association are about to be acted upon in this town, for which purpose a committee is already formed.

*Public Meeting at Sheffield.*—On Wednesday evening last, a meeting was held in the large chapel of the Methodist New Connexion, for the purpose of submitting to the religious, and especially to the Wesleyan public, a calm consideration of the principles at issue between the Conference and the Association. The anxiety discoverable on the part of the people for information was very considerable, and the audience respectable, attentive, and numerous. A large attendance of Wesleyans and some of the preachers was hailed with pleasure by the deputation, the spreading of information on the subjects at issue being their grand object. A most patient and encouraging hearing was given to the statements and arguments advanced in proof of the necessity of reform in the system at present administered by the Conference. It was too much, however, to be borne in a gentlemanly and Christian manner by the Rev. Mr. M'Lean, who had quailed during the evening under the exposure of his system, and who attempted to interrupt Dr. Warren towards the close of the meeting; but Mr. M'Lean will remember whilst he lives the reception

he received on the occasion. He opposed himself to the decided feeling and opposition of the meeting, and he could not be heard. Dr. Warren and Mr. Lamb remained in Sheffield the next day to see whether Mr. M'Lean was sincere in his proposal for discussion: but no; he had received quite enough on Wednesday not to venture on such dangerous ground. The collection amounted to £43.

There was a complete hole-and-corner meeting held by their Reverences the next night to allay the feeling of disgust and discontent that now exists against their arbitrary and absolute administration.

*Liverpool.*—A chapel connected with the Herculanum Pottery Works, near Liverpool, the hamlet surrounding which contains a numerous population, has for a long period been occupied by the Methodists. The congregation and society worshipping there, wearied with the neglect with which they have been treated by the preachers, and the irregularity with which the services have been supplied, almost unanimously got up a requisition to the managing proprietor of the Works, to allow the Association the free use of the chapel. This request was cheerfully complied with, and the services are now regularly performed by the local preachers connected with the Association.

*Pitt-street Chapel.*—Several of the singers having attended at the Music-hall to hear the Rev. Mr. Lamb preach, Mr. Gibson was ordered by Mr. Michael Ashton, the amateur organist, (by what authority was not mentioned,) to state that they were not in future to attend the orchestra. The reason assigned was, that as preaching had commenced at the Music-hall, a *division was about to take place*. Mr. Gibson inquired who belonged to the Association, when one of the singers replied that he was not then a member, but intended to become one shortly; and several others expressed their determination to abide by the Association, let the consequence be what it might. For the expression of such sentiments they were forbidden to enter the orchestra any more.

*Mr. Samuel Jackson.*—When this gentleman travelled in the Sunderland circuit, Mr. Vint thus accosted him,—"The travelling preachers are doing all they can to deprive the local meetings of their authority." Mark the reply,—in a coarse, dry, singing way, he said,—*"Let them draw the purse-strings a little tighter and they'll soon give way."* How does Mr. Jackson like the working of the system so far as it has been tried?

## THE LONDON TRUSTEES' ADDRESS.

We are exceedingly sorry to perceive, by the two last numbers of the *Christian Advocate*, the existence of a misunderstanding (to call it by no harsher term) between two such tried friends to Methodistical reformation as the editor of that paper and Mr. Robert Eckett. The editor seems to consider the issuing of the address, inserted in our last number, as a breach of faith on the part of the London trustees, since it does not contain any recommendation of, or allusion to, the principle of lay delegation. Mr. Eckett, in repelling the charge, adduces the circumstance of our insertion and approval of the address, which both these gentlemen seem to think is an evidence of our disapproval of the principle of lay delegation. In this idea we beg to say that they are both mistaken. Our insertion of the address proceeded from the following motives. The present disrupted state of the societies intimates a wide-spread feeling of discontent, both with the laws and *usages* of the Conference, and with the mode of their administration. But whilst all are agreed as to the evils which exist in the Connexion, the exact mode of applying the remedy is not a point on which entire unanimity prevails. Many seem to think that the mere admission of lay delegates into the Conference would at once prove a *panacea* for all the abuses with which Methodism is afflicted. The general feeling, however, appears to be (and this is certainly the view taken of the subject by the meeting in Manchester,) that we are, as a religious body, without a constitution, and that a constitution defining the rights and privileges both of preachers and people is imperatively required, with a guarantee that it shall be better observed than the former pretended constitution of 1795 and 1797. Whether this guarantee shall consist in giving into the hands of the separate circuits the entire legislative power, as far as regards the affairs of their own circuit, leaving to the Conference as at present constituted the appointment of preachers, or whether the supreme legislative functions shall be discharged by a united body of preachers and laymen, is a point on which difference of opinion might be expected to exist. The right of interference on the part of the laity with the management of church affairs was the great principle on which the propositions agreed to at the delegate meeting were based, but the precise mode of carrying out this principle, so as, on the one hand, to secure the stability and efficiency of the institutions of Methodism, and, on the other hand, to give due scope and effect to the voice of the people, was, as we understand it, a matter left open to future arrangement. Under these circumstances, and considering that the first great object of the Association should be to spread information in such manner as to give a definite idea both of the evils themselves and their remedies, we thought it a duty incumbent upon us to give publicity to the address alluded to, particularly as we find in a resolution of the delegate meeting, the following passage:—"That it be recommended to the quarterly meetings in the mean time to propose addresses to Conference, founded upon the Declaration of the London Trustees, in so far as the said Declaration is in accordance with the principles alluded to."

As far as this address goes we coincide generally with the views of the writer. In our opinion it does not go far enough, but are we on that account to reject the assistance of all disposed to assist in the work of reformation? If nothing in the address expressly recommends lay delegation, there is certainly nothing opposed to or discountenancing it. The "minor points" and "lesser considerations," mentioned in our introduction to the address, do not refer to the principle of lay delegation, but to the withholding of contributions and the re-adoption of the rules of 1795, on both which subjects we differ from the address. We shall shortly recur to this subject, and in the meanwhile would raise our feeble voice in earnestly impressing on the minds of all true friends to reformation, that the cause of truth and justice can never suffer, but must always gain, by full, fair, and free discussion on every subject.



## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Detector*, in a letter received too late to be noticed in our last, and too long for insertion, jocularly observes, that,—“Judging from the flippant style of his epistle to the venerable Dr. Warren, Mr. T. Percival Bunting seems a youth whose modesty is not likely to stand in the way of his advancement; and seeing that he is nothing loath to exhibit his name in print, our correspondent requests him to have the goodness to inform the *Connexion* at large, through the medium of the *Lantern*, if, after all that has been said and written on the subject, the Articles of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797, are even at this moment inserted in the Conference journals, and if not, why not?” He contends that, “whether these important documents were wilfully omitted at the time when they ought to have been recorded in the journals, or subsequently abstracted from them, is a question, even if it could be satisfactorily decided, of very little importance, the former being just as mean and treacherous an act as the latter. If the Rev. Messrs. Taylor and Newton have not already made the *amende honorable* and done their duty to the people in this matter, let the Conference Attorney-General urge them to a speedy performance of it. To refuse compliance with this reasonable demand on the ground that, as the President and Secretary were not parties, in their present official capacity, to the execution of the Articles and Concessions, they could not with propriety, after so many years have intervened, make and attest such entry, would be mere quibbling; for as no one, in or out of the *Connexion*, whatever may be his opinions in regard to the controversy, will have the hardihood to deny that these solemn treaties of peace ought to have been legally recorded as soon as they were ratified, it follows, as a matter of common honesty in the regular transaction of business, that the omission, immediately after its extraordinary discovery by Dr. Warren, should be acknowledged and rectified in the best way circumstances will permit. Therefore let the facts be duly registered without delay, and a minute appended in the Journals to the effect that, from some unknown cause or neglect, the Articles and Concessions were not entered in the years in which they were respectively made. If this be not done, the people will inevitably infer that the authorities are indisposed to do justice; and that the dominant party in Conference never intended to act in the spirit of the treaties into which they solemnly entered. Dr. Warren's discovery sounded mournfully in the ears of the people; and a refusal to rectify the omission would be to them as the passing-bell that rings the death of the Methodist constitution.”

**TACTICS OF THE CONFERENCE PARTY.**—The tactics of the Conference party in this town have, from the commencement of the present contest, been characterized by the utter absence of every thing like open or honourable controversy. Their depraved appetite for every species of filthy slander and coarse abuse has been sufficiently demonstrated by the fortnightly outpourings of their calumniating organ. Circumstances which have come to our knowledge very recently, prove to a demonstration that their malignity towards their opponents is not confined to the war of words merely. We are not quite at liberty, at present, to enter fully into an exposé of their manoeuvres; suffice it to say, that attempts have been made, not only privately to injure the characters of members of the Association, but actually to deprive them of the means of earning a livelihood for their families. We could “a tale unfold” of several instances of this assassin-like conduct. Applications have been made to influential individuals, both in Liverpool and elsewhere, from these self-styled “friends to peace and good order,” to deprive members of the Association of their countenance and business, but we have the pleasure to say that disgust and contempt have hitherto been the only feelings elicited. An open and avowed enemy may be respected when his opposition is above board, but an highwayman is an honourable man compared with any person, however respectable he may consider himself, who would in this sneaking, cowardly, base manner, seek to injure his neighbour.

The caustic letter of *Oliver* is unavoidably postponed until our next.

We feel obliged to *Amicus* for his remarks on the “*Illuminator* and the gin-shops,” but they are quite unnecessary. The article in the publication alluded to is beneath contempt. The writer attempts to be sarcastic and jocose on the subject, but he has utterly mistaken his forte; his smiles wear a most dismal aspect. One talent he certainly possesses in a most eminent degree, that of putting words together in such a manner as to defy any person to extract either common sense or meaning out of them. As far as any thing like meaning can be made of his mystified effusion, it seems to be something like the following:—Methodist preachers are in the habit of drinking spirits. They have associated with, and promoted to office in the Church, both wholesale and retail dealers in the article, and yet when it answers their sinister purposes, they can, in the twinkling of an eye, consign to perdition, without benefit of clergy, all the dramsellers who are heterodox or contumacious, not—mark! for their contumacy, but for carrying on the business in which they have been encouraged by their reverend *soi disant* friends. Our exposure of such outrageous inconsistency, in our last number, is termed “a great libel on our understanding!” The obtuseness of intellect in this writer we can excuse and pity, but what are we to think of his moral perception?

Several articles in type are unavoidably postponed. We are glad to learn from *Observer*, of Douglas, that the cause of Reform prospers in the Isle of Man. The letter from Nantwich came too late to be attended to this week. Sheerness is not forgotten. We beg to apologize to *Theophilus*, whose well-written letter shall certainly appear in our next.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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No. 17. WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1835. Price 2d.

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REV. JOHN WESLEY AND REV. JOS. BENSON.

The following curious, apostolic, and genuine letter, never before published, will be read with great interest by our readers, not merely on account of its distinguished writer, and the still more celebrated personage to whom it is addressed, but as powerfully bearing on one of the questions which now so violently agitate the Methodist public. We can vouch for its authenticity, and can name, if necessary, the travelling preacher in possession of the original; for, unlike the *Illuminator*, we never publish facts on anonymous or questionable authority.

About the year 1788 the society in Dewsbury erected a chapel, and, contrary to their wishes, Mr. Wesley required it to be settled on the Conference plan. In consequence of their refusal, Methodist preachers were forbidden to preach in that chapel, and in the course of a correspondence on the subject, Mr. Benson, the useful and well-known commentator on the Bible, and editor of the *Wesleyan Magazine* when it was worth reading, addressed the following to the venerable founder of Methodism.

Mr. Wesley used to say, that, although the people submitted to *him*, they would never submit to the assumption of arbitrary and irresponsible power on the part of his successors; and it is therefore deeply to be lamented that age and infirmity prevented him from establishing a liberal scheme of church government, in order to avert those disturbances which he foresaw would inevitably follow, if his successors, in this respect, attempted to tread in his footsteps. But Mr. Wesley, perhaps, never contemplated that Methodism would attain to its present growth; and foresaw not that in another generation the people would be so much more enlightened than they were in his day.

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REV. AND DEAR SIR,—You tell me in the last letter I had the pleasure to receive from you, dated July 30th, our committee send their ultimatum to the trustees of Dewsbury, by this post; if they accept it, well; if not, their blood will be upon their own heads. These proposals, which you call your ultimatum, I understand they were willing to accept. What a pity, then, they should afterwards have been withdrawn, and other different proposals made, which it seems they will not accept; as by this means an entire separation has taken place; much, very much, (I think,) to the disgrace of both parties, (of both parties, I say;) because in a case of that nature, where neither essential truth was to be given up, nor plain duty omitted by either, if one side would not have yielded, the other should. I am very far from excusing the trustees at Dewsbury; I think them exceedingly to blame, and accordingly have written a long and plain letter to one of them upon the subject, which yet I fear will not produce any good effects. But are not we to blame also? Is the step we have taken consistent with Christianity, with prudence, or with the plan we ourselves profess to go upon? First, is it consistent with Christianity? Do the doctrines or examples of our Lord or his apostles authorize such a step?—

Do they authorize us to leave a congregation gathered by ourselves, and a society awakened and brought to God by our means, and that for many years has been under our care, and is still willing so to be, yea and to be directed by us in all spiritual matters, (to leave them I say,) because twenty or thirty of them who happened to have the power in their hands, will not make over a house lately built to meet in, to the sole use of us, and our successors for ever, as not knowing, they say, what sort of men we or our successors may hereafter be. Where in the New Testament are we taught any thing like this, by precept or example? I read nothing, dear Sir, like it in all the Bible; on the contrary, I find our Lord and his apostles, and evangelists, preaching everywhere, wherever a door was open, *without* making any objection on account of the place they might preach in, not being settled as they recommended, and much more, not deserting a people they had long preached to, and had under their peculiar care, on any such account. Nay, I think it is very plain from their whole doctrine and behaviour, that they would not have disturbed the peace of the most inconsiderable society of Christians about any such matter. I ask, secondly, is it consistent with prudence? are we not missing the very end we aim at? Yea, and taking the direct road to miss it, stretching the string till it breaks, and in this violent contention for power, losing the power that we have. The power arises from the people's love to us, and their love to us is the fruit of our usefulness to them; let us continue to be useful to them, and they will continue to love us, and we shall continue to possess all the power a wise man would wish for,—a power to do people good. This power, and, together with it, all our influence in spiritual matters, we are depriving ourselves of, as fast as we can. By our violent measures we are prejudicing our people against us; we are filling their minds with jealousies and suspicions concerning us, that we are selfish, designing men, aiming not so much to do our hearers spiritual good, as to establish ourselves in temporal power and authority; then the way being blocked up to do them good, our usefulness is obstructed among them; their love is lessened towards us, and our authority over them is at an end.

But as a recompense for this loss, human laws have given us power over the bricks and timber of a house, and we can, let who will hinder, send preachers to preach, where, by and by, it may be, none will be present to hear. Poor recompense! Give me the people, and let what will come of the houses; let me gather them into my Father's kingdom, and let the houses be consumed with the world. As to that particular congregation, the case is plain, our imprudence is manifest; in our great haste to prevent them ever separating from us and choosing a preacher of their own, we have taken steps which have induced them to do it immediately, whereas, had we yielded a little at this time, and suffered them to amuse themselves a little with that toy, their deed, I am persuaded we might have supplied them with preachers half a century, perhaps as long as we continue in a body, at least if we had sent them preachers calculated to do them good, and if not, the sooner they had turned their backs on us the better. Nay, and if we had but been quiet for the present, perhaps by and by their minds might have cooled, they might have seen otherwise, and have altered their deed according to our wish. I mentioned a third point; I doubt we are not consistent with ourselves; our professed design is to do the people all the good we can, not seeking theirs, but them; with this view we have preached in imitation of the apostles and first pastors of the Church; wherever a door was opened in chapels, private houses, barns, stables, backyards, fields, and streets, without inquiring whether those places were settled upon us according to our plan! nay, knowing they were not so settled. Now, either we did right or wrong in this. If right, why kick up a dust about one particular house, when there are many hundreds more, even as many private houses and barns as we preach in, nay, and some chapels, in the same, or rather worse, situation, being, to all intents and purposes, private property; if we have done wrong, let us change the plan of our proceeding, and abandon every private house, barn, stable, or back yard, where we have been accustomed to preach, unless they will settle them according to our plan; for it may happen that landlords or tenants may arise to possess those places, who may exclude us and receive other preachers; nay, the people that assemble in those places may, by and by, choose for themselves preachers of their own, and exclude us; let us, therefore, determine to be beforehand with them, and get them all properly settled, or give them up. This, dear Sir, is the plan we must pursue if we wish to be consistent; and let it not be objected that we have societies at many of those places, containing scores, yea, hundreds, of precious souls, awakened by our means, and in the way to heaven; and if we, the shepherds of those sheep,

desert them, they will be scattered from the fold, and either be torn in pieces, or perish for want of food. (No matter, let them perish, we destroy them not; they destroy themselves in that they will not settle their house according to our plan.\*) I say, therefore, since we have begun let us make an end; let us go through with the business, and determine to abandon every place that is not settled as we recommend. This will find the active men among us work enough; they may then give up preaching altogether, and go from place to place throughout the kingdom, endeavouring to establish our authority for ever, that we and our successors, from age to age, as long as the world shall stand, *and none else*, may appoint preachers to supply every chapel, private house, barn, stable, outhouse, or back yard, where preaching has been wont to be, and that none be permitted to preach in such places but such as we think proper; then will our due authority be properly extended through all the kingdoms, and our plan become permanent. Excuse me, my dear Sir, I am pained exceedingly to see such steps taken. I have told you before I have no fault to find with the plan of settlement fixed by the Conference. I wish every house in the kingdom was settled on that plan. I have no objections to any prudent peaceable measures that may be taken to bring this about; but to desert a congregation of 1500 or 2000 people, and leave a large society of pious souls as sheep without a shepherd, because we cannot, by fair means, prevail with the persons who happen to have the power in their hands to settle their preaching house as we desire;—this is a step which I for one protest against, as unchristian, imprudent, and inconsistent with our profession and plan from the beginning. You, dear Sir, are not to blame, unless for hearkening (I think) more than you ought to the advice of those who are more forward and active in kindling a flame of strife and contention than in promoting peace and good will amongst men: and I have not written the above to you that you may answer it to me, but that if it contain any thing that may be of use to you, in the conducting so great a work as the Lord has set you at the head of, you may take it accordingly. Not doubting but you will excuse the freedom I have taken in speaking my mind on this occasion, which a sense of duty has constrained me to do, and praying that we may never forget that our influence depends upon our usefulness, that whensoever or wheresoever we cease to be useful, our influence will cease, and that it will then signify little that we have possession of the bricks and timber of a house.—I conclude myself, as usual, your obedient Servant in Christ,

JOSEPH BENSON.

Hull, Sept. 6, 1788.

\* Mr. Wesley's former letter to Mr. B.

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#### PORTRAIT OF THE CONFERENCE, BY THE LATE REV. JONATHAN CROWTHER.

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Not very long since we inserted in the *Lantern* the very strong opinion expressed by Dr. Clarke respecting the atrocious proceedings of the Conference in the celebrated Leeds case, in 1828. From the extreme soreness of our opponents on this subject, we should be inclined to think that they have felt the force and truth of the Doctor's remarks rather keenly. Some further evidence in respect to Dr. Clarke's opinions on the Leeds affair has very recently come to our knowledge, which we may make use of on a future occasion. We have now to present our readers with a counterpart to the portrait drawn by the Doctor, from the hand of no less a personage than the Rev. Jonathan Crowther. Not, good reader, the Jonathan who has recently entered the lists against our friend Dr. Warren, and done his best (what could man do more?) to impale him with the acuteness of his logic, or to crush him beneath the ponderous weight of his classical erudition, but a namesake of his, apparently quite as acute if not as learned as his successor. In a letter dated Plymouth Dock, Feb. 26, 1796, he describes the Conference as "the annual sight of six or seven men getting round the table and fighting with each other, talking by turns, (except when several of them talk together), engrossing all the speechifying, while the rest sit round in sullen, stupid, or indignant silence, *the devil perching on the front of the gallery*; while love, meekness, and wisdom, together with our guardian angels, and even the Holy Ghost quit the assembly; *and the confused group appears to the weeping heavens something like THE ASSEMBLY IN A COCKPIT !!!*" This is a picture of the Conference drawn by one of themselves, and bears internal evidence of being a striking likeness. What will Jonathan Crowther the second say to this? Either the statement is true, or his



relative must have been a strange character for a Methodist preacher. In the horns of this dilemma we leave him, without much expectation that either his logic or his erudition will be able to extricate him. We would advise those who are for Methodism as it is, to get the above pair of portraits framed that they may have constantly before their eyes the species of legislative assembly which wields over them the iron rod of absolute and unconditional authority.

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## ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

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### LETTER II.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—I now proceed, as briefly as its copious and somewhat complicated character will permit, to "enter a little more minutely into the argumentative merits of the question of ecclesiastical power as settled in the oracles of Divine inspiration." And permit me to observe, Sir, in the first place, that by taking this high and honourable ground, and trying the claims of Methodist preachers to their assumed ecclesiastical power by that holy standard, I pay them a very high compliment, conceding to them thereby a kind of canonical dignity to which they can have little claim in the estimation of that "church" whose establishment in England many of them affect to consider as equally the fruit of Divine and "legitimate" secular authority, and of so sacred a character as to neutralize even the vices of its priesthood, while it consecrates the unhallowed perpetrators of those vices to the service of a righteous God and a heaven-bound community. In the estimation of the priesthood of that church, Methodist preachers are mere *laymen*, destitute of all sacerdotal character, and unauthorized intruders upon the sacred offices of pastors of churches and ministers of the Gospel. And, indeed, Sir, I am constrained to confess, that while I concede to them that character, I should, if called upon for such a purpose, be utterly at a loss upon what scriptural or ecclesiastical grounds to recognise in them the "successors of the apostles," excepting only their personal qualifications for the ministry, and their election to that office by the suffrages of the people who support them in it. Their qualifications consist in, first, personal holiness; second, suitable talents; and third, proportionate success. Should these be lost by any preacher of the Gospel, his claim to the ministerial character necessarily expires with them, and the same power that first raised him to that dignity should, in that case, be fully authorized to deprive him of it.

It would, however, be equally unjust and degrading to the character of Methodism, and, as such, an offence against both truth and piety, of which, I trust, I cannot be guilty, to suppose that as a religious institution it was not, in its original constitution, an eminent display of the wisdom, grace, and love of God to man, and to this highly-favoured nation in particular. It has unquestionably proved itself to be such for nearly a century past beyond the possibility of a doubt, and beyond all example in modern times. Nor could any thing short of the *power of God*, infused into its spiritual fabric, and operating through all its admirable details of instruction and church-fellowship, have ever given it that astonishing success, boundless extent, and hallowing influence, which have, in that comparatively short period of time, placed it decidedly at the head of all the religious institutions of the world. And, Sir, it cannot be denied that in such an association a considerable portion of power must, of necessity, and with strict propriety ought to be, vested in its ministers, who, if found every way competent to the faithful execution of their important functions, must be recognised as, under God, by the concurrence of the people, and in conformity with the precepts of the Gospel, the accredited managers of its spiritual concerns, and the principal directors of all its energetic operations. This was eminently the object professed, and I believe conscientiously aimed at, in framing the constitution of "Wesleyan Methodism," and one of the most important questions now at issue is, whether or not the exact points of rectitude and security were ascertained and fixed upon, as the fulcrum upon which to suspend and poise the equilibrium of that "balance of power" which ought always to subsist in a religious community between the ministers and the people, so as most effectually to secure the permanent peace,

unwavering stability, and increasing prosperity of the Connexion.\* It must be acknowledged that this was a difficult point to adjust in laying the foundations of an infant society, whose first "master builders" were clergymen, and whose views of church government were of rather a despotic character. The fact is, that Mr. Wesley was, in the *true* but not in the *obnoxious* sense of the word, a SPIRITUAL DESPOT, but he was not a TYRANT. Influenced by the grace and spirit of God, and with a single eye to the glory of that God and the salvation of men, Mr. Wesley laid the foundations of Methodism, and erected *the first story of its fabric* upon his own assumed power, confirmed, however, by at least the tacit concurrence and ready obedience of the people; and it must be confessed that he wielded the dangerous weapon he thus possessed with equal innocence and honour as it respected himself, and with astonishing success in reference to the prosperity of the sacred cause in which he was engaged. That great man had also the rare but happy art of securing both the affections and confidence, and the consequent implicit obedience of a numerous and enlightened people, over whose spiritual and eternal interests he ruled with almost undisputed and quite irresistible power. But when "the rush of years" admonished Mr. Wesley that his happy entrance into his eternal rest must soon oblige him to consign his important charge upon earth to other hands, he naturally sought to transmit the power of its government to his appointed successors in all the plenitude of authority in which he had himself so long and so successfully possessed and exercised it. The experiment was accordingly made, and the celebrated "Deed Poll" was contrived and executed for the express purpose of bequeathing all the *transmissible power* of the Connexion to "the Conference," in its perpetual state of legitimate existence, for ever. But, Sir, Mr. Wesley's successors were men and not gods,—and woful experience has at length demonstrated the indubitable fact, that as they cannot be safely intrusted with the exclusive possession of that power, so they must not be any longer permitted to exercise it to the manifest injury of the Connexion; that is to say, *if it can be wrested out of their hands*. This, Sir, is the point now at issue,—the object of the grand existing struggle which has called your "Association" into existence, and brought into hostile collision the hypothetical if not arrogant and unauthorized claims of the preachers, with the inherent, indisputable, and unalienable rights of the people. To define, to control, and, if found necessary, to abridge, limit, and restrain the licentious character and despotic influence of the power assumed by the preachers, appears now to be the imperative and indispensable duty of the Connexion;—and the important question for present decision is, both in its principle and practice, whether the people composing that Connexion have, or have not, sufficient power, with adequate integrity, fortitude, and pious zeal, to maintain and enforce their own rights against the unjust usurpations of their *Papistical* preachers?—or whether, in making this hopeless attempt, its noble-spirited agents must be finally driven out of the incurable Connexion by its incorrigible and unprincipled governors? And it must be acknowledged that the present aspect of the dispute strongly indicates the latter alternative.

A slight glance at the institutions of Methodism is sufficient to unfold to our view its duplicate character,—possessing, as a branch of the true church of Christ upon earth, a share of Divine authority, and as a human association, requiring laws and rules to regulate its government and direct its economy, in all their respective branches and minutest ramifications. As far as its Divine character extends, God is its proper governor,—providing, by his power, and qualifying, by his gifts and graces, its ministers for the effectual discharge of those sacred duties which belong to the ministerial function; and, consequently, it is to God that those ministers are chiefly responsible for their fidelity in the use and discharge of that important trust reposed in them, which involves the eternal interests of myriads of precious and immortal spirits committed to their charge by "the great Head of the church." Should, however, *any one* of these perish, for whose salvation Christ laid down his life, through the criminal negligence

\* In this important question are involved all the fertile sources of dispute, agitation, and dissatisfaction which now distract and divide the Methodist body. In my next letter this subject will be brought under a more scrutinizing investigation in detail,—it being necessary previously to lay down some general principles as our guides to a fair conclusion. Whatever powers ministers of the Gospel possess, they should be distinguished by four grand characteristics; namely, they should be, first, sanctified by Divine authority; second, approved and confirmed by the voice of the people; third, adapted to promote the peace and prosperity of the Connexion; and, fourth, subject to the investigation, control, and correction of the legitimate legislative authority of the body, wherever that may reside.

or despotic tyranny of its spiritual guide, the loss of that soul will be awfully visited upon the faithless pastor, to *his eternal loss*, if not of final salvation, at least of a large portion of the glory and felicity which his more faithful and affectionate pastoral care would have secured to him for ever. In this point of view it is plain that God alone will be the righteous judge of Methodist preachers; and I confess my fears that too many of them will on this ground be covered with "shame and confusion of face" when standing at the awful tribunal of their Omnipotent Judge!

In submitting this branch of Wesleyan Methodism to the testimony of "Bible Christianity," it is necessary to observe, that the Scriptures announce to us the Divine establishment of a variety of official characters in the constitution of a Gospel ministry in the primitive churches. Amongst these we find "apostles, prophets, evangelists, bishops, pastors, teachers, deacons, and presbyters." The first two of these ceased with the apostolic age; and in attempting to assimilate the remaining six with the fabric of Methodism, perhaps we might unite the *pastoral* and *episcopal* designations (taking the latter in the primitive simplicity of its character of *oversight*) in the office of "superintendent preacher;" that of *evangelist* we recognise in the subordinate preachers and missionaries; the title of *teacher* may accord with the office of a local preacher; *presbyter* with a class leader; and *deacon*, with a steward of the Methodist Connexion;—but neither Bible Christianity nor Wesleyan Methodism includes either the title or office of a PRIEST. Popery assumed this upon the credit of its "sacrifice of the mass;" and the British reformed Church has very improperly retained the title, while she surrenders the office. But, Sir, in tracing out the characters of these respective officers, as recorded in the sacred oracles, we search in vain for any thing either preceptive or exemplary to justify the arbitrary judicial authority and executive power assumed by Methodist preachers in the government of that Connexion, of which they are the sole legislators, the irresponsible judges, (to all human tribunals,) and the MURDEROUS EXECUTIONERS! In all these essential branches of its constitution, modern Methodism unequivocally filiates itself upon its true prototype,—  
"THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS."

In the primitive apostolical churches this was impossible, for our Lord Jesus Christ himself strictly prohibited the assumption of all legislative and coercive dominion among his disciples, strenuously inculcating the principles of co-equal fraternity and mutual accommodation, founded in a community of rights, in the true spirit of humility and genuine love, in all their intercourse with each other, whether religious or social; and, in fact, "the law of love" was *the only law* he ever enacted for the government of his church upon earth, of which he himself set them the most noble and consummate example.\* Thus we find him, while re-proving and condemning the intolerable pride, the lazy apathy, the deep hypocrisy, and the despotic tyranny of "the scribes and Pharisees," the popular "preachers" of his day,—exhorting his own disciples against both the spirit and the practice of such hateful dispositions and anti-Christian conduct, saying unto them, "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth; for one is your father, which is in heaven. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself,"—namely, by assuming an unauthorized dominion over his brethren,—"shall be abased."† And again, when the two sons of Zebedee, animated, it should seem, by a similar spirit of ambition and pride to that which, by its pre-

\* If, then, "the law of love" is the only law ever enacted by the Lord Jesus Christ for the government of his church; and if that law is written upon the hearts of all his faithful subjects, what are all human laws,—enacted by Popish or Methodistical conclaves, and enforced by their spurious and contemptible authority—but insolent invasions of the people's most sacred rights: and impious defiance of the paramount authority of their Divine legislator? They can be nothing else; and hence it is as plain as the noonday sun that, under the Christian dispensation, no such things as "ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS," framed by human wisdom, and enforced by human authority, can have any kind of legitimate existence. Rules and regulations for mutual accommodation may, and, doubtless, ought to be established in every well-regulated Christian community; but then, *these neither can nor should be binding upon any but those who voluntarily concur in their enactment, and engage to observe them.* This is the only true principle of church government; and, as far as it is violated by any self-appointed ecclesiastical legislators, their enactments, *be they good, or be they bad,* should be indignantly spurned, and instantaneously rejected as the unauthorized assumptions of an illegitimate power; in the degrading submission to which the most sacred principles of Christian liberty must be sacrificed to the ambition of its domineering priesthood! If these men will amuse themselves with forging chains for spiritual slaves, never, never let it be said that British Christians will degrade their exalted character by wearing those chains as the badge of their slavery.

\* Matt. xxiii, 8—12.

valence amongst Methodist preachers, is now disorganizing the whole fabric of Methodism, urged their mother—(being actually ashamed to do it themselves, so powerfully did their consciences struggle against their pride)—to solicit for them a domineering pre-eminence from their master over their brethren—"the meek and lowly Jesus" at once rejected their unjust claim, and reproved their most culpable ambition, saying, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them: *but it shall not be so among you* : but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister." The Greek word here used is *diakonos*, the same that occurs in 1 Timothy, iii, 8, 13, where it is translated "deacon;" and its proper signification is, either a voluntary or a hired servant. "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." (Matt. xx, 20, 27.) The Greek term here used is *doulos*; and it is remarkable that it is the same that is by the Holy Spirit applied to Christ himself, on his assumption of human nature, in Philippians, ii, 7. Its proper signification is a *slave*,—the possession of whose person and services has been obtained by purchase or capture; and although it cannot be literally understood in either of those cited cases of its occurrence, yet it is deeply indicative of the total exclusion of all domineering power in the church of Christ, and of the required presence and operation of that spirit of humility, voluntary subjection, and servitude, which the great Author of our holy religion established as the criterion of true greatness therein, and which he most wonderfully condescended not only to inculcate by his precepts, but also to *enforce by his own example*,—for while he was "the Lord of life and glory," he not only addressed his disciples by the endearing title of "brethren," but literally performed for them the servile office of "washing their feet!" And while he avows his supreme dignity and power as their "Lord and Master," he so far exalts them to a participation of his own honour and glory as to send them, even after his resurrection from the dead, this heart-cheering message:—"Go," saith he to Mary Magdalene, "go to *my brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John, xx, 17.)

Hence, Sir, it is clear, beyond all controversy, that, as far as both the precepts and example of the Lord Jesus Christ can or ought to extend their influence and authority in the government of his church, the principles and practice avowed and exhibited by "the Wesleyan Methodist Conference" in its self-assumed and most despotic government of that Connexion, are at direct variance with those of "the great head of that church," to whose awful judgment and righteous decision of the questions at issue in the Connexion the Reverend Editor of the *Illuminator* has had the thoughtless temerity—I had almost said the matchless audacity—to appeal on the behalf of the iniquitous proceedings of that Conference. Instead, therefore, of denying the humiliating precepts of their nominal "Lord and Master," and following his glorious example, we find the Conference assuming and exercising what their counsel openly avowed and even gloried in, on the late trial of its strength in the Court of Chancery, viz. "an irresponsible and irresistible power," erected upon the destruction of all Christian liberty in the Connexion, equally cruel in its character, and despotic, unjust, and anti-Christian in its operation. And, Sir, as it is certain that the Bible can furnish them with no suitable motto wherewith to describe or sanction their tyrannical conduct, I beg leave, in concluding this letter, to present them with one, which, I am sure, will be found completely to answer their purpose; it is simply—"sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas!" The learned editor of the *Illuminator* can be at no loss for a translation of this appropriate motto; and if he were so, his conscience, as a member of "the Conference," could readily help him out with it!\*

Should you kindly indulge me with the insertion of one more, and that a concluding essay, on this interesting subject, I must therein allude more particularly to the precepts and practice of the apostolic churches in reference to the points at issue in this important discussion. Meantime I remain, Sir, very respectfully, yours,

THEOPHILUS.

Liverpool, May 15, 1835.

\* Lest, however, his reverence should refuse his aid to your unlearned readers on this occasion, I beg leave myself to attempt an anglicization of the words on their behalf: their meaning is,—"*Such is MY WILL, so I DECREE, and let that WILL stand for the REASON of my mandate!*" It is evident that this glorious principle of spiritual legislation is equally well calculated for the meridian of the VATICAN IN ROME, or that of its great antitype, the INQUISITORIAL TRIBUNAL OF METHODISTICAL IRRESPONSIBLE TYRANNY IN ENGLAND; and "Bible Christianity" equally demands the destruction of both these august tribunals!



## THE NEW CHAPEL IN LIVERPOOL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—The presumption and arrogance of your opponents in this town seem almost to have reached their climax. We have long known that they are "the people, and wisdom shall die with them," (at least in their own opinion.) Not content, however, with the sole possession of oracular wisdom, they have at length, it appears, taken out a patent for the exclusive possession of honesty. The tender conscience of that meek and gentle personage, the editor of the *Illuminator*, is touched to the quick by the dreadful wickedness of the leaders at Leeds-street Chapel retaining the class-money in their hands, by desire of their classes. What! eat the Parson's grass! The idea is too sacrilegious to be entertained without horror. The circumstance again of an heretical gin-seller "murdering his Majesty's subjects, and driving them to hell like sheep," without being assisted by the countenance and support of the Methodist preachers, is too much for his nerves to bear. Justice, honour, and honesty, when they have forsaken all the rest of the world, will surely take refuge in the breasts of the Conference, and their supporters. My present purpose is to throw a little light on this exclusive honour and honesty which this party arrogate to themselves. I will not now allude to the means made use of to swell the amounts of the late missionary collections, such as first promising subscribers that the money should not be paid over without their consent, and then carrying it to the missionary meeting in direct opposition to their wishes. I shall pass by the attempts made both in public and in private, to injure, by every possible means, the members of the Association, by vilifying their characters, and seeking to deprive them of their livelihood. I shall now merely say a few words on the subject of the new chapel, lately intended to be erected at the north end of the town.

A little more than twelve months ago, very vigorous exertions were made to obtain money for this purpose. Some of the very men who are now held up to public scorn as having been for years agitators and disturbers of the peace of the societies, were persuaded both to subscribe and to exert themselves to solicit contributions. In this they were tolerably successful, a considerable sum of money having been raised under the *express promise* that if the chapel was not immediately commenced, or if the requisite sum could not be forthwith raised, the money *should be returned* to the subscribers. I have, unfortunately, been induced to subscribe under these representations. More than a year has since elapsed, and the affair still remains in *statu quo*. I wish to ask the conscientious editor of the *Illuminator* what is to become of the money? Is it to be sent to the Theological Institution to endow a professorship?—Is it to swell the amount of the Contingent Fund, or will they have the absurdity, after driving away between 1,200 and 1,300 members, actually to build a new chapel, instead of attempting to dispose of one of the old ones? Or, what is the most unlikely of all, will they have the *honesty* to perform their promise and return the money to those whom they have first *humbugged*, to use the Rev. S. Jackson's term, into parting with their cash, and then arbitrarily dismissed for resisting the most odious and oppressive tyranny? Unlike Dr. Bunting, I *do* wait for an answer. The parties to whom I allude are, no doubt, all "honourable men," but, until they come forward in that character, they must, at least, admit that we can give them a Rowland for their

OLIVER.

May 20, 1835.

## PROCEEDINGS IN NANTWICH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—We conceive it to be our duty to acquaint you with our proceedings in Nantwich, as we suppose that they have not yet travelled far beyond the precincts of our circuit. At our March quarter day, the items for letters exceeded the usual sum. Mr. Bunbury being present, inquired what the amount for the same had been the preceding quarter, when it was discovered that that had been still more exorbitant, being, according to the circuit steward's own report, £1 18s. Mr. Bunbury being there only as proxy steward for a neighbouring society, was unceremoniously ordered to withdraw from the meeting by our superintendent, Mr. Tabraham. Other things ensued, but I have not time or space to record them. At a leaders' meeting held in Shavington, at which place Mr. Bunbury resides, Mr. B. attended in order to know why Mr. Tabraham had so uncourteously ordered him to withdraw from the quarterly meeting alluded to. He wished to know if he had any thing to bring against him, and what was the nature of it.

An altercation ensued, in which, according to the testimony of the members present, not much credit is due to Mr. Tabraham, who used such an expression as the following, (without provocation calling for a constable:)—“Walk out of the place; you are an impertinent fellow,” flourishing his stick over his head, and strutting about the chapel, &c. &c.

A few days subsequent to this melancholy scene, Mr. Bunbury received notice to attend a leaders' meeting in the same place, to take his trial, merely on the ground of this previous altercation. His own leader was from home, and a female leader who was present was not allowed her suffrage. Mr. Bunbury was then expelled by a prepossessed judge, under most extraordinary circumstances. A protest was immediately drawn up and signed by twenty-six officers and members of society, and presented to Mr. Tabraham. The strongest expressions were to the effect that “we should recognise Brother Bunbury as a Member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society;” “that we deeply shared in his sufferings,” &c. &c.

We had a meeting on Association principles on the Saturday evening following, when Mr. Tabraham obtruded himself, in conjunction with his colleague, Mr. Smithson, and Mr. Latham, the circuit steward. I may mention that Mr. Latham was, in the commencement of the present struggle, one of the most zealous for reform the circuit has in it. These individuals, in the most ungentlemanly manner, rushed through the door, and dashed through the company, to the opposite side of the room. Mr. Latham, springing on a seat, mounted on the top of a pew, as though he was determined to be chairman of the meeting. A most singular scene then took place, and one, too, of the most indescribable confusion, which continued for about two hours. Mr. Tabraham proceeded with some degree of trepidation to read the names aloud of those who had signed the protest. The second preacher, however, Mr. Smithson, encouraged him to proceed. Almost at the same time, Mr. Latham was crying aloud, “He is not expelling you.” Mr. Tabraham proceeded to call in the plans and class books of some, ordered others not to go to their appointments in the morning, pronounced others no longer members of society, and said of all that they could not and should not be recognised as members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society. After these outrageous proceedings, we broke up, under the idea of an *interregnum*. The following day, one of the brethren whose name was on the protest, and who had not been at the meeting, and therefore was not aware of his fate, came to Nantwich in order to preach, when Mr. Mellor, who by example made us all reformers, but now is a subscriber to the Theological Institution, prevented him from preaching. Mr. Buckley went to one of the expelled brethren's classes, but they all came out, and left Mr. Buckley to himself. In the interim between the afternoon and evening services, we heard that Mr. Smithson, by order of Mr. Tabraham, intended publicly to read out the twenty-six individuals who had been previously expelled. We called as many of the brethren together as possible, and told them of the circumstance. They all declared that they would stand or fall by their injured brethren. Mr. Smithson made some most contradictory remarks, such as that brother ——— had virtually, although not actually, withdrawn himself from the society; he hoped, therefore, that all would soon be forgotten, and become straight and smooth,” &c. &c. He then distinctly, and with a loud voice, read over twice that T. Stanyer, Mr. Horton, Mr. Blagg, and A. Gilbert, were no longer members of the Methodist Society. We should have submitted to have heard our names read over once, but on being read over again, brother Gilbert rose and said, such language as Mr. Smithson had used might appear very pretty (referring to the soothing observations alluded to,) and yet four men were at the same time read out of the society, and therefore begged to move that the cause of their expulsion, viz., the protest, should be read. On this motion being heard, it was received with a clapping of hands, and cries of “Hear, hear.” Mark, the society only were invited to witness these cruel proceedings, but scores in addition, being aware of the business, remained in the place. The members of society, however, as far as I could perceive, did not make any noise. As soon as the noise had subsided, Mr. Stanyer, being the oldest leader in the town, begged to be heard. Mr. Eaton, too, a venerable man, and whose school we now meet in for public worship, offered some observations on the unfeeling manner in which his brethren had been treated. Mr. Horton then read the protest, after which Mrs. Tabraham raised her voice in defence of her husband and to the condemnation of Dr. Warren, loudly crying, “I would not stand in Dr. Warren's shoes for ten thousand worlds,” when a cry was heard, “nor Dr. Bunting's either.” Brother Gilbert then proposed that they should return to their homes, such being a most unprofitable way of finishing the Sabbath. We met the following evening, and

appointed Mr. Eaton's school-room for public worship. We had a love-feast last Sabbath, and about 250 were present. In the chapel there were about 50 only present at their love-feast. Not a word was allowed to be said at our meeting respecting the unfortunate occurrences which had so recently taken place, whilst in the chapel, I understand, it was very frequently alluded to. We have appointed four new leaders, one of whom commenced his duties last week, and had a conversion the first night. We are about opening a new place, and intend to put on the plan a number of well tried men, who can exhort, and will, we doubt not, be very useful. As the quarterly visitation is at hand, we shall need tickets, and will thank you to send us a sufficient number. The Lord is with us; we never meet but "his glory is visible." His presence is sensibly felt. We are believing for and expect an outpouring of the Spirit. We have all the active part of the society with us. In the account which I have sent you there is no colouring, no exaggeration,—all is true and authentic.

Signed on behalf of the Local Preachers and Leaders,

A. GILBERT, Member and Secretary of the Association.

P. S.—Mr. Horton is a most excellent quiet man, who has contributed largely to the support of Methodism. Mr. Stanyer is the oldest leader in the town. The other two are leaders and local preachers.

May, 1835.

## SUSPENSION OF MR. JOHN RAYNER, OF HULL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—As you have allowed many accounts of trials and expulsions to appear in the *Lantern*, I take the liberty of forwarding a sketch of mine. At a very small leaders' meeting, held on the 21st of May, a resolution was passed which empowered the preachers, when the classes were met, to pass by the names of those persons who were thought to be favourable to the Association. In consequence of that decision, my ticket was refused me. When the deputation informed me that the preacher would do so, I protested against such a course, as a very irregular one in the case of mere suspicion. I demanded a trial. They, in reply, said I should have one if I wished; after the preacher (a stranger from Doncaster) had refused me the ticket. Having no alternative I consented. How differently are cases conducted in criminal courts!—they allow a prisoner to have a trial, and deliver a defence before judgment. But in Methodist courts of justice it appears they act differently:—first, they punish or expel, and then they offer a trial. To me it seems neither law nor justice; and I am much mistaken if such an abuse of power is not nearly at an end. It neither will nor can be tolerated in a free and Christian country!

The Rev. W. CLEGG then read the charge:—"That of giving your countenance and co-operation to the Association, now occupying the Tabernacle, in Sykes-street," which I admitted. I then asked for a copy of the resolution passed on the 21st of May, but was refused by the stewards and a few others, including Mr. Clegg.

Mr. C. WELCH.—If you will take my advice, give a copy of the resolution. They still refused. He repeated it again—but they still refused.

Mr. RAYNER.—"I shall not press it further." I then entered upon my defence; contending that, owing to the many false assertions and foul insinuations that had been made—both from the press and the pulpit—on the character of those who in the least degree favoured the side of the Association, it was necessary to vindicate my character in that meeting. The expressions to which I referred were from the *Illuminator*,—"blood-thirsty schemes,"—"champions of desolation,"—"midnight plunderers,"—"reckless and designing men,"—"wolves,"—"bad men." Here many leaders said "We do not believe these sentences were applied to you."

Rev. J. M'OWAN.—We have nothing to do with the *Illuminator*.

Mr. RAYNER.—I have been a member of the Methodist Society for twelve years, and am known to most, if not to all of you. I would ask—"Do the expressions just quoted apply to me?" (No! no!) I appeal to my leader if he has, during the twelve years that I have met with him, ever heard any thing prejudicial to my character, or seen any thing in my conduct unbecoming a Christian? (Mr. Marsh, my leader—"No.") As a Christian, what is my crime? Why, says the charge, "That of giving your countenance and co-operation to the Association now occu-

pying the Tabernacle in Sykes-street." If going to worship in the house of God is a sin, may I live in it;—may I die in it. I next stated the grievances of which I complained. Whilst doing so I was often interrupted.

Mr. ELLIS.—We cannot sit here to hear you go on in that way. I would not hear him; he intends to print it.

The Rev. W. CLEGG stated that the consitutional door never was shut against the officers, and appealed to the meeting if he had not, at the December quarter day, asked the meeting if they had any thing to bring forward. (None answered.)

Of course Mr. Clegg could not recollect that he refused to allow Mr. Cookman's resolution to be discussed, or even read, at that quarter day.—*See Defence of G. Cookman, Esq., of Hull.*

Mr. CLEGG.—We have not any thing against brother Rayner's moral character. (Oh, no! no!) He has admitted the charge: I therefore suspend him for three months.

Mr. MORLEY, a leader.—For what do you suspend brother Rayner?

Rev. J. METHLEY.—For what Mr. Rayner has admitted—for giving his countenance and co-operation to the Association.

Mr. RAYNER.—If you mean by countenance, going occasionally to the Tabernacle, I admit it. If you mean by co-operation, giving a subscription, I admit it also; but nothing more.

Rev. W. CLEGG.—We do not suspend you for going to the chapel.

After a silence of a few minutes, not any of the leaders speaking, or appearing inclined to do so, I said,—Is my trial over, Mr. Clegg?

Rev. W. CLEGG.—Yes. Call in brother Mearns.

Mr. RAYNER.—Will you allow me to remain and hear brother Mearns tried?

Rev. W. CLEGG.—The meeting has decided that your cases should be tried separately; you cannot, therefore, be allowed to remain. You have alluded to the Rules of 1800 in your defence. The word *majority* inserted in those rules must have been a mistake of the printer, as you will not find it in our Minutes.

The next morning, I asked Mr. Clegg more about the rules of 1800, when that gentleman said that the printer might have printed them from memory; to which I replied, that I thought it improbable, and inquired why the Minutes were allowed to be circulated such a number of years *with* the word *majority* inserted.

Rev. W. CLEGG.—Because *we did not need to alter them before the Leeds case!*

I am, yours, &c.

JOHN RAYNER.

Hull, 9th June, 1835.

#### RESIGNATION OF THE REV. JAMES JONES.

In recording the following letter of resignation, we cannot refrain from expressing a hope that preachers who espouse "the cause of our much-injured people, and are determined to advocate their rights and liberties," will not follow the example of the Rev. James Jones, but rather, by remaining at their posts, compel the Conference party to carry out, to the full extent, the powers they claim. By reserving themselves, if possible, until the meeting of Conference, and then voting in favour of the people, preachers will render much more essential service to the cause of religious liberty, than by premature and unnecessary resignations. We do not, of course, presume to censure Mr. Jones, not knowing the circumstances under which he acted.

(From the *Christian Advocate*.)

Gwennap, May 26, 1835.

DEAR SIR,—I have, for many years of suffering and sorrow, been cherishing a hope that I should be able to live down the violent prejudices of my brethren, and should enjoy the happiness of witnessing more of Christian liberality among the rulers of our body; and, under the influence of that cheering, but delusive hope, I have suffered much, laboured hard, and exercised a very long forbearance. But I am, at length, quite satisfied the case is hopeless; and am now convinced that the peace of my own mind, the health of my body, the happiness of my



family, and the success of my public ministry, and, indeed, every thing which is able to give a real value to my life, require me to resign my situation in the Methodist Connexion. Truly, these are times which call for decision and sacrifice in all the lovers of truth and Christian liberty, and in which a man must make his own election, between slavery with honour, and liberty with disgrace; and in which he must either take the side of the priest, or the side of the people; and in which he must either espouse the cause of ministerial prerogative and irresponsible power, or that of our equal rights and equal liberties. For myself, I am, in politics, a reformer; and, in religion, a Dissenter; and am equally opposed to all irresponsible authority, whether in Church or in State; and to all the dogmas of divine right and divine prerogative in all our rulers, civil and religious. As a Methodist preacher, therefore, I have greatly desired to obtain the most liberal interpretations of our doctrines, and the most discreet and forbearing administration of our discipline; and have, in consequence thereof, sincerely deprecated the many acts of misrule which have been committed on our people, and the many perverted interpretations which have been officially given to our laws. I have regarded the making of such things as Eternal Sonship and Eternal Prescience, articles of ministerial subscription, and the condition of all confidence and public favour, as being shameful innovations on the known liberality of Primitive Methodism, and in open hostility with the spirit of the age, and as being utterly subversive of our religious rights and Christian liberty. I have, indeed, been long obliged to distinguish between Methodism and its official administration; and this is the only apology which I can offer to the friends of liberty for my having signed my name to a late coercive and inquisitorial *Declaration*.\* All our primitive and essential doctrines I do most cordially receive as being of scriptural and divine authority; and our religious discipline I have equally approved, and have, for the space of *twenty-seven years* conscientiously, and, I hope, temperately administered. But, I cannot approve of our rules being officially misinterpreted for the purposes of religious coercion, or of their being made subservient to misrule by any jesuitical chicanery; neither can I submit to be confined to any set of human phrases in the statement and propagation of our doctrines; nor will I consent to barter the right of private judgment in the reading of the Bible, or give up the right of theological inquiry and of theological discussion for any situation in the Methodist Conference. In fine, I have now espoused the cause of our much-injured people, and am determined to advocate their rights and liberties, and to cast myself and all my numerous family on the providence of that gracious Being who is the defender of the oppressed, and the deliverer of them that put their trust in him; and I do hereby tender you my resignation, and withdraw from the Methodist Body.

I am, my Dear Sir, your affectionate Brother,

JAMES JONES.

*To the Rev. John Davies, Chairman of the Cornwall District.*

\* How many more have signed with the same mental reservation?—*Edits. Christian Advocate.*

## PROCEEDINGS IN SALFORD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—It is with deep regret that I am under the necessity of laying before the Methodist public another instance of tyranny and despotism, practised by the Rev. E. Grindrod and those of his party belonging to the general committee of the Salford Wesleyan Sunday Schools for children of all denominations, and I feel myself in duty bound to let the supporters of these institutions know that they are not governed by law, but by priestly domination and party feeling, as the following plain and unvarnished statement will prove:—Regent-street School has been one where the greatest unanimity prevailed among the teachers and conductors up to the present agitations; and I believe it would still have continued so to exist had it not been for the exercise of undue, irresponsible, and unlimited authority which has generally marked the movements of Mr. Grindrod upon this as well as upon other occasions.

As soon as Mr. Grindrod had heard that I had embraced the principles of reform, I was served with a note informing me that my labours, as a conductor in Regent-street Sunday School, were at an end, and hoping that I would, with that notice, withdraw from the school; but with such a form of notice I was not satisfied, such being contrary to the general rules of the institution; therefore, I

called a meeting of the conductors and teachers present on the following Sunday ; after having read the note, I asked the conductors if there had been a meeting of the committee since the last quarterly one, and as they were members of the said committee, I asked if it was the intention of that committee that I should retire from the school, as I considered my notice to be contrary to the general rules of the institution ; though I had conscientiously sacrificed the office of a conductor in that school, I was not aware that the line of conduct which I had pursued in joining the Association would lawfully deprive me of the privilege of continuing as a teacher. The conductors said there had been no committee meeting that they knew of ; and that with regard to the note they knew nothing at all about it until I had told them, and it being so unsatisfactory I was requested by the teachers to wait upon one of the general secretaries. I availed myself of the first opportunity, and saw Mr. Morris, auctioneer, and he informed me that he knew little about the note, which he believed had been written by Mr. Hattersly at Mr. Grindrod's request, and merely signed by him in his official capacity. Upon hearing this I stated that there was no charge preferred against me, or any reason specified to justify them in sending such an unreasonable request. He (Mr. Morris) then told me that I might have a trial if I thought proper, or words to that effect ; or if I would call upon Mr. Grindrod he would give me every satisfaction I might require. I then told Mr. Morris that it was a strange mode of procedure to execute a man first and then try him afterwards. I accordingly took the first opportunity of calling upon Mr. Grindrod, and told him that the business which brought me there was in reference to a note that I had received, signed by the two secretaries on behalf of the committee, requesting me to withdraw from the school, which note I believed to have been written by his (Mr. Grindrod's) authority. I said that I was aware I had forfeited the office of a conductor by reason of not being a member of the society, but I was not aware that such would prevent me continuing my labours as a teacher in the school, and by his permission I would read the rule which referred to the necessary qualifications of teachers. He said, "If you are not a member of the society, what are you ?" to which I replied, "A member of the Association, Sir." Then he read me the resolutions passed in the Manchester first circuit, and observed, with all the vehemence he possessed,—that by joining myself to these men I was endeavouring to starve him and his family, and robbing the fatherless and the widow. This came like a clap of thunder upon my head, and I told him if he wanted to know my character I would refer him to the place where I was employed, or to the neighbourhood where I resided, or to the Sunday school in which I had laboured ; and he would find, upon inquiry, that my character would not answer the shocking description which he had just given of it ; and with reference to the resolutions I did not fully concur in them, neither was it required of me when I joined the Association. I also told him that I had read nearly all that had passed or been published on both sides of the question, and had fully made up my mind ; but I had not come there to dispute on that subject ; I had called merely to ask him the question whether it was the intention of the committee that I should withdraw from the school,—he replied, with a look and with a tone of voice which I shall not easily forget,—“Yes, by my authority you must leave.” I then arose to withdraw, and on offering him my hand he refused to accept the usual tokens of common civility.

On the following Wednesday evening I attended the teachers' monthly meeting, and detailed to them the account of my interview with Mr. Grindrod, when they expressed their utter abhorrence of the spirit and conduct which he manifested on that occasion, and likewise unanimously agreed, that as they could not conceive I had broken any of the rules of the school, I had a right to continue in the school as a teacher. Accordingly I again entered upon my labours.

After about two months had elapsed the same Mr. Morris and Mr. Davis called at the school, and told me that as my case would be brought before the general committee on the Tuesday following, they wished to know whether I was a member of society ?—“No,” I replied, “I am a member of the Association.”—“Do you support the Association ?”—“Yes, I do ; what I formerly gave to the society I now give to the Association.”—“Do you contribute any thing towards the missionary cause ?”—“No.”—“Do you contribute towards the support of the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools ?”—“I do not.”—“Then what do you support ?”—“I contribute towards the support of this school.”—“I cannot think,” said Mr. Davis, “upon what grounds you can stop in the school ?”—I answered “Because the rules do not expel me.”—I then referred to the rule ; and they

both replied by saying they had nothing against my moral character: but Mr. Morris said it was natural to suppose that I should be desirous to win the scholars over to particular forms of church government which I most approved of. I told him that my object was not to teach church government to Sunday school children, but to teach them the knowledge and love of God. The committee, however, came to the conclusion that I must withdraw from the school; so, of course, there was no alternative left me but to retire.

Hear what this priest-ridden secretary says, in reference to the qualifications of a Sunday school teacher in an institution which has for its object the instruction of children of all denominations in the rudiments of our most holy religion:—"If you are not supporters of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, and also of the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, you are not eligible teachers for this institution." Judge ye whether this is a proper person or not to fill so important a situation in it, or that of class leader in the church of Christ.

On the following Friday there was a teacher's meeting convened for the purpose of making arrangements for our Whitsuntide festival, when Mr. Walker, one of the teachers, remarked that before the business of the meeting could commence, it would be necessary to know how the committee had decided upon Mr. Denson's case; when Mr. Ashton, one of the conductors, immediately replied,—that the committee had come to the unanimous conclusion that I must no longer stay in the school. As soon as the teachers heard this, several of them expressed their abhorrence at such unrighteous proceedings, and were determined to share the same fate as myself. Mr. Leah observed—"That though he was not a member of the Association, he saw the necessity of reform, and that some of the present conductors entertained the same sentiments, and had even expressed them." Mr. Ashton said,—"He had but differed in reference to the means by which it was to be accomplished." Mr. Leah continued to remark,—"That the committee had as much right to expel him, and all others who entertained these sentiments, and likewise all the teachers who were not members of the society, as he had to exclude me. If the committee had burnt the rules first, then they might have come to this decision with some shade of justice; but, if the committee could trample under feet the present rules, as they had in this case, he could no longer continue his labours in the school under such a committee." Thus the meeting broke up without transacting the business for which it was convened.

On the following Sunday several new teachers were introduced into the school, to fill any vacancy that might occur owing to these circumstances, but they were not received by the scholars with that cordiality that their old ones had formerly been. Many of the teachers, as well as some of the scholars, have left through disgust at such unrighteous proceedings, the latter having found an asylum in the Association schools connected with the Cloth Hall, though upwards of a mile distance. Thus am I torn from a school which I dearly loved, by the relentless hand of persecution. I am sorry that the Rev. Mr. Grindrod should make peaceful Sunday schools, into which he had never entered on the Sabbath day during the whole of his stay in this circuit, nearly three years,—I say I am sorry he should make these the medium through which he intends to wreak his vengeance upon all those who oppose him in his tyrannical career.

Yours, most devotedly,

Salford, June 10, 1835.

ROBERT DENSON.

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#### THE LONDON TRUSTEES' ADDRESS AND THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

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The *Christian Advocate* of June 8th contains some further remarks on our insertion of the address of the London Trustees in No. 15 of the *Lantern*. The editor animadverts in pretty strong terms on what he is pleased to call "our inconsiderate act" of inserting the "Eckett Address," and considers the reasons alleged in our last as altogether insufficient. He has, however, altogether omitted, or overlooked the main reason,—that the cause of reformation has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, from the fullest discussion on every subject connected with it. The *Christian Advocate* "has done the state some—ay, much—service;" and we should be the last in the world to derogate from its merits; but he must permit us, in this case, to think for ourselves.

We do not consider that either "the object or the tendency" of the address in question is to foment a difference of opinion, or that our insertion of it is at all calculated to "set the parties at *entire* variance;" and if even it had that tendency, we contend that the London trustees had a right to be heard: the principle of lay delegation is surely not so devoid of arguments in its favour that the slightest expression of an opposite opinion is not to be breathed. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," is as important a motto now as in the days of the apostle. It seems our "fifth reason is particularly bad, as the address did not emanate from any quarterly meeting." We are here misrepresented. Our reason was that the address did not emanate *from*, but was directed *to*, the quarterly meetings, calling upon *them* to send addresses and delegates to the next Conference. We complained of the address not going far enough. But it is said "the address goes so far as to say, that the propositions it contains are *sufficient* to secure the rights of the members of the Connexion;" "and is not this going far enough?" "Is not this opposed to lay delegation? and could that principle be more directly discountenanced?" We reply, the propositions in our opinion are *sufficient*; provided always that they are guaranteed to us by the adoption of some principle of lay interference in the acts of the legislative body. The propositions demand the recognition of certain rights—so far we coincide with them; but we require these rights to be secured from being frittered away by any future "usages," by the adoption of lay delegation in Conference, or something equivalent to it. Our principle is, that the people, by themselves or their representatives, ought to be and must be, parties to every law which is binding upon them; but the precise *modus operandi* of this principle is to us altogether a secondary consideration. In as far as the London address states the grievances under which the Connexion labours, and the rights which the members ought to enjoy, we coincide with it; but we want a further guarantee, which is not there alluded to. We have not the vanity or presumption to institute any comparison between our feeble efforts and the long-tried usefulness of the *Christian Advocate*: but as far as our humble ability goes we are determined never to slacken in our exertions until the Methodist people obtain in their own society the birthright of every Briton—a voice in the enactment of the laws by which he is governed.

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*The Consistency of the Rev. G. Marsden.*  
—This Reverend Gentleman's conduct seems a complete enigma to his warmest admirers. Not very long ago it was officially announced, indeed it has been declared again and again, by Mr. Marsden and the other preachers, that no member of the Association could be allowed to remain in connexion with them. Last week Mr. Marsden gave the quarterly tickets to Mr. Killey's class. Mr. Joseph Hiles, on that occasion, avowed himself a member of the Association, notwithstanding which he was presented with his ticket without a single complaint! "I know not whether I can conscientiously accept this ticket," said Mr. Hiles, "being determined to remain with the Association."—"Well, well," replied Mr. Marsden, "you had better take it, brother; you will all come back to us by-and-by." A

day or two after this, a class leader at Windsor, in the south circuit, was summarily expelled for precisely the same cause. Mark the consistency. Mr. Samuel Jackson expels a man for not giving to the yearly collection, although not a member of the Association. Mr. G. Marsden continues in the society a member of the committee of the Association without offering the slightest objection, and, a day or two afterwards, expels another for the very same cause; yet we are told, again and again, that the principles of Methodist discipline are fixed and unalterable!

*Liverpool.*—On Thursday evening last the Rev. Dr. Warren preached in the Music-hall, after which a collection was made, in aid of the fund for defraying the expenses of the Chancery suit. The room was filled to overflowing, and the collection amounted to £27.



In our last number we mentioned that the chapel at the Herculaneum Pottery was turned over to the Association, at the express wish of the congregation and the acting proprietor. The preachers, however, seem not willing to give up the place without a struggle. They have since taken a private house, in which their preachers officiate. On Sunday se'nnight, Mr. D. Rowland preached in the chapel to a crowded congregation, whilst the preacher sent by Mr. Marsden returned to town, not being able to obtain a single hearer.

*Mr. William Dawson.*—The ridiculous queries written by this gentleman, and which were so generally and deservedly censured, were not originally intended for publication. Happening to call upon Mr. Scarth, of Leeds, Mr. Dawson unfortunately produced the manuscript; and, with his usual *discreet zeal*, Mr. Scarth sent it to the press without the knowledge or authority of the author. It is nothing, however, but strict justice to Mr. Dawson to say, that, notwithstanding his blunders and absurdities as a writer, he is a most useful and acceptable preacher; and, to his honour be it spoken, he never accepted any thing but the *bare expenses of his journeys*, though on many occasions something more, as a compliment or remuneration for his exertions, was offered.

*Dr. Clarke.*—Though thousands of quotations like the following, condemnatory of the tyrannical proceedings of the dominant faction, might be easily quoted from the works of that great commentator, Dr. Clarke; yet, to such base shifts will certain calumniators descend to bolster up the unhallowed cause of

despotism, that, with all the audacity of falsehood, they shut their eyes to the truth, and persist in representing the pious and learned Doctor, (whose memory has been so often traduced in the pages of the *Wesleyan Magazine*), as a silent spectator of the iniquitous proceedings at Leeds in 1797.—“There are some who take a barbarous pleasure in expelling members from the Church. They should be continued in as long as possible; while they are in the Church, under its ordinances and discipline, there is some hope that their errors may be corrected; but when once driven out again into the world, that hope must necessarily become extinct. As judgment is God's strange work, so excommunication should be the strange, the last, and the most reluctantly performed work of every Christian minister.”

*Overton.*—In this pretty little town, where reform principles have triumphed more completely, perhaps, than in any other part of the kingdom, a new chapel will be opened on the 21st instant by Mr. David Rowland, of Liverpool. The Conference party have a good chapel here, but they are so destitute of countenance and support, that they have actually ceased to visit it.

*Cornwall.*—Yesterday week a Wesleyan reform meeting was held on Warbstow Barrow, near Camelford, an ancient Druidical monument; the chair was occupied by Lieut. Dunstan, R.N. The particulars of the proceedings have not yet reached us. Before the meeting, a sermon was preached by the Rev. John Averill, who has recently been suspended for siding with the people.

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#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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We disagree from the opinion expressed by our friend *R. D.* as to the necessity or propriety of confirming the statement in page 174 of the *Lantern*, in reference to the expulsion of Mr. Whittingham by Mr. Samuel Jackson. That account has never been publicly contradicted, for the simple reason that Mr. Jackson knows it to be true. As to the preachers and their friends denying its truth in private, where they have no one to contradict them, those persons must be infatuated indeed who would not receive their accounts “*cum grano salis*.” Our statement was public, and on the authority of eye witnesses of the transaction. If any explanation is offered let it be public too, or it is no explanation at all.

We are reluctantly compelled to omit the remainder of our notices to correspondents for want of room.

*No. 18 will be published on Wednesday, the 1st of July.*

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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## SPIRITUAL DESPOTISM.

A work under this title has lately issued from the press, from the pen of the talented author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," and other similar works, which bear the stamp of extensive research, deep thought, and pious feeling. The author, a strenuous advocate of the episcopalian form of church government, and a staunch friend to the principle of a national establishment, can scarcely be expected to have a very decided predilection in favour of popular interference in church affairs. The testimony of such a writer (unwillingly extorted from his candour) to the scriptural authority, as well as abstract right and expediency, of "the people at large exercising church discipline, and arranging the secular interests of the society," comes with peculiar weight.

The present age, if it be distinguished for any thing, is certainly marked by a spirit of searching inquiry into the origin, scope, and tendency to good or evil, of established forms and usages. Nor is this "spirit of the age" at all to be deprecated or regretted. In proportion as the mind becomes enlightened by knowledge, and expanded by civilization, the faculties of reason and judgment are exercised and strengthened. Religion, certainly, does not destroy or impair these faculties, but elevates and improves them, and modifies their exercise, by bringing them into subjection to a higher authority, from which there lies no appeal. Time was when a reference to hoary antiquity was considered a justification of any form of government, however despotic, or any clerical privileges, however unreasonable or absurd. Those days are now gone by; they are subjects of history, and nothing more; and those persons surely act not in accordance either with their own interests or the welfare of society, who would at the present day stifle even the most searching and rigid inquiry into any form of church polity or principles of government, but, least of all, who would throw the mantle of concealment from the public eye over those exclusive privileges, and that uncontrolled authority over pecuniary and secular matters, which our Methodist preachers love "not wisely, but too well."

If the present system of Methodist government (if that can be called a system which seems to have no fixed principles but the arbitrary caprice of the superintendent preachers) be founded on the precepts of Scripture, and the dictates of common sense, why should it shrink from the test of public opinion? Why should not its rules, ay, and its *usages*, too, be tried by the law and the testimony? We put it to all who have looked with any interest on the present struggle whether this has been the case? The members of the Association

appealed to reason, and were rudely thrust out of society. We cite the precepts of Scriptures, our opponents refer us to the decrees of the Conference; we quote the practice of the Apostles, they direct us to the usages of the preachers; we appeal to St. Paul, they look up to the President of the Conference.

The main principle contended for by the Association, and as pertinaciously resisted by the preachers, is the absolute inalienable right, derived both from Scripture and reason, of the lay members of the church to a share in the management of its concerns. On this point let our author speak:—

“Christianity, assuredly, is neither despotic in its spirit, nor could it generate despotism, in any case, if allowed to retain that rudiment which, in the primitive Churches, operated as a natural counterpoise to clerical authority. This counterpoise was the participation of the people—the *πληθος*, in church deliberations and church acts; and especially the scope allowed to popular agency in every punitive exercise of discipline. An effective check is this to what might otherwise be formidable in sacerdotal power. So long as it is fully and freely admitted, clerical authority may safely reach a high and salutary point; but remove or restrict it, and then our alternative is either to give room to the pride and arrogance of priests, or to cashier the ministers of religion of all dignity and power, (as an order) and to deny them the greater part of their useful influence. The presence and active operation of this popular element in church affairs is not a whit less necessary as the guarantee of the power of the clergy, than as the safeguard of the liberties of the people.”

Let our Conference, the only deliberative assembly which sits with closed doors, and which is so nervously afraid of any of its proceedings being made public, as to visit with the whole weight of its indignation any “vile brother” who should dare to disclose the “secrets of his prison house,” read the following passages:—

“In every age it has been by gathering themselves into clusters, apart from the people, by sitting in conclave, with the doors barred against the laity, and by concerting measures, not in the church, but in chambers and closets, that the ministers of religion have converted the Gospel into a system of tyranny and an engine of cruelty. The history of Spiritual Despotism hinges upon this divulsion of the elements of church power. An impious and fatal divorce of what God had joined, a divorce craftily effected by the clergy, was the principal means of introducing and establishing all corruptions and all usurpations.

“The people, whether in mass, or by representation, being present, and taking a share in church proceedings, and being allowed a real, not a nominal agency in church acts,—knowing whatever is proposed, and concurring in whatever is determined, there will no longer be danger in granting to the clergy as high and free authority as Christian men could wish to exercise, or safely to themselves sustain.

“The two great rudiments of ecclesiastical polity, namely, the sacerdotal origin of sacerdotal powers, and the presence and concurrence of the people in acts of discipline, and in the enactment of regulations, and especially in the management of pecuniary affairs, are correlative, and the worst evils arise from parting them, or from practically nullifying either. The one is not worth contending for apart from the other, and the one is essential to the complete operation of the other. Whichever party aims to compromise the privileges and rights of the other, is blind to its own.”

We beg to recommend to the writer of the lengthy article in the last *Illuminator*, who undertakes to prove that the interference of the laity in church affairs is not scriptural, the following passages:—

“As matter of history the fact of the concurrence of the mass of the church in deliberations and decisions stands on the face of the apostolic writings. The multitude came together, and took their part in the most important consultations; to the multitude was referred the election of officers charged with the secondary affairs of the community; the brethren held up the hand, although they did not lay the hand; the *χειροτονία* was allowed them, where the *χειροθεσία* was

reserved to the presbyters and bishops. Public business was indeed arranged, propounded, and carried through by public persons; but still it was carried as *public business*. The machinations in closets of interests that ought to be openly discussed, is a treason against the community, nor was any such secret management admitted even by the divinely commissioned apostles.

"But the tenor and the terms of the apostolic epistles afford the most satisfactory evidence on the point of the liberal and open constitution of the first churches. These epistles, fraught with various and specific advices on questions of discipline and government, are addressed comprehensively and directly to the mass of believers; not to the people through the medium of their rulers. The pastors are, indeed, mentioned; but this mention of them distinctly implies that the writer, in each instance, had his eye immediately fixed upon the people. Were, then, the people—the believers at large—the mere subjects of church power? Did they constitute an inert mass, upon which sacerdotal functions were to be exercised? Common sense is insulted by any such supposition: historic evidence is outraged by affirming it to have been the fact. The church, with its teachers and pastors, was one living body, various in its functions, but full of energy and action.

"The course recommended or enjoined, on various occasions, by St. Paul, and the public measures which he advises to be pursued, were plainly supposed to issue from the breadth of the church, and not to be promulgated from the closet of an oligarchy.

"There will be no end to the nice distinctions and the subterfuges resorted to by interested controvertists; nor must we expect to convince such persons. But men who respect themselves, and who have learned to exercise a vigorous common sense in common affairs, will hold it certain, in all cases, that those who are instructed how to perform particular duties, are actually the parties looked to for the discharge of such duties. Exhortations and commands are not cross-directed by plain and upright men. A and B are not told in what manner X and Z should acquit themselves of their parts. But in the apostolic epistles, it is the people at large who are instructed on what principles to exercise church discipline, and how to arrange the secular interests of the society."

The two following paragraphs contain the sum and substance of the demands of the Association; and we would confidently make our appeal to an enlightened religious public, and say,—Whether these requirements be just and reasonable, or, as designated by our calumniators,—revolutionary, worldly and wicked,—judge ye!

"We conclude, then, that a cordial and effective admission of the people—meaning the members of congregations—to a participation in the management of church affairs, and especially in the infliction of chastisements, and in the control of pecuniary interests, is an essential and most important rudiment of church polity.

"There can be no security, no liberty, and scarcely any purity or vitality, in a church which says to the laity in mass,—'You have nothing to do with theology, but to receive what we teach you; and nothing to do with rules of discipline, or laws of administration, but to yield them obedience.' Under any such state of things we find the very essence of spiritual despotism, whether or not it be fully expanded."

This writer is decidedly of opinion that the decline of spirituality in the primitive church, and the rapid advance of corruption, was accelerated, if not entirely caused, by the practice of holding general councils, for the settlement of ecclesiastical affairs, composed of bishops and clergy exclusively,—a model after which the Methodist Conference is at present constructed.

"The holding of a council (*or Conference*) must not be reproved as in itself improper or inexpedient; but the spirit and practice of apostolic Christianity imperatively demanded, in such cases, that the laity, by their own representatives, that is, by some of themselves, and in a due proportion of numbers, should have been called to attend the convention, and when there should have been allowed to exercise some efficient powers. The sending of the bishop alone, or the bishop or some few of his clergy to represent the church in the council, and thence to bring home canons and decrees, not to be discussed but obeyed, was an innovation and a usurpation, fatal as well to the liberties of the people as to the



purity and spirituality of religion. The laity, if not often qualified by theological accomplishments for taking an active part in debate, are at least qualified for swaying decisions after hearing of arguments, by that vigorous and untainted good sense, and by that fervent and simple piety, in both which the clergy are too often lamentably deficient."—p 199-200.

Whilst on this subject we cannot help congratulating the *Illuminator* on the new light which seems to have broken upon his mental vision. One great principle advocated by the Association, from the commencement, has been the absolute necessity, for the sake of the preachers themselves, as well as the prosperity of the Connexion, of transferring the financial and secular affairs entirely to the management of the people. Mr. Vevers and his coadjutors, on the other hand, contend that in Methodism "whatever is right;" that the present system is so perfect that to alter it would be to destroy its usefulness and efficiency. The writer of the leading article in the last *Illuminator* is compelled to admit that

"The appointment of deacons, and the election of the person to transact this temporal business at Jerusalem, indeed proves one point, namely, that the apostles and primitive preachers of Christianity were anxious to free themselves, as much as possible, from the obligation 'to serve tables,' that they might 'give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' This principle is fully established by these transactions; and we confess it would afford us much pleasure to see an arrangement, equitably made, to free the ministers of our own Connexion from secular concerns. It is not the management of the funds for which we contend,—but the spiritual rights, freedom, and efficiency of the pastoral office."

Here, for once, we cordially agree with the *Illuminator*, and beg to say, that if this admission had been *officially* made six months ago, a great deal of heart-burning, strife, and contention, might have been spared the societies. We are always glad when disputants can be brought to narrow the grounds of controversy, and to analyze the precise question at issue. If this were now done in a spirit of candour and good faith, we do not apprehend any very serious difficulties in the way of restoring to the Connexion a solid and lasting peace, based on principle and mutual good feeling between the pastors and their flock. We are as anxious for the maintenance of the "*spiritual* rights, freedom, and efficiency, of the pastoral office," as the writer in the *Illuminator* can possibly be; but we would take care that the "rights" in question should be purely "*spiritual*," and would prevent the pastors "*lording it over God's heritage*" by depriving them of the power of so doing.

Many well meaning but timid persons cannot separate the idea of the usefulness and efficiency of the machine of Methodism from the dead weight and friction by which its extensive progress has been prevented, and its sphere of operations narrowed. They cannot see that the principle of vitality in Methodism has been its purity of doctrine, and the variety of its admirable means of grace, which have borne it forward in spite of its despotic principles of government, and the arbitrary and exclusive exercise of power by its hierarchy. To such we would recommend the perusal of the following passage:—

"The fact cannot escape an intelligent spectator of the present critical struggle of religious parties, that the crown of pre-eminence hangs at the goal, ready to be carried off by that party, be it which it may, that, with a manly ingenuousness, an honest zeal, and a Christian conscientiousness, shall undertake ITS OWN REFORM, its reform in theology, in modes of worship, and in polity. There would be little hazard in saying that this prize might now be won even by the least considerable of our various denominations which would resolutely strive for it, and which, while its several competitors are absurdly commending their

peculiar notions and usages, and assailing those of others, should unsparingly examine its own, and apply boldly the remedies which good sense and scriptural principles suggest. A religious body thus acting would quickly outstrip its rivals, would command the respect of the people at large, would draw to itself men of sense and talent from all parties, and soon would imbibe all, and embrace all."—*Spiritual Despotism*, p. 413.

Finally, we ask shall this glorious consummation be accomplished?—shall our beloved Connexion become a praise and glory in the earth?—shall her "free spirit," uncontrolled by clerical jealousy and unfettered by priestly domination, bear her onward to

"Bid the glad nations rejoice,  
And bow the whole world to her sway?"

Or, shall she, bound hand and foot by the decrees of a despotic oligarchy, decline from the high eminence to which she is entitled, calmly witness the prize borne off by her more liberal competitors, and, at length, see "the kingdom taken from her and given to another more worthy than she?" We cannot—we will not despair of the former alternative. The principles of reformation are rife in our age and country, and in despite of the petty sneers and low scurrility of the *Illuminator*, the pompous inanities of the *Watchman*, and the rabid malignity of the (so called) *Methodist Magazine*, as evinced in his late *anti-Christian retrospects*, we leave the event to Providence, believing that "*Magna est veritas et prevalebit.*"

#### THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS LAY DELEGATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Several attacks on the New Connexion have lately appeared in the *Illuminator*, which are greatly calculated to produce false and injurious impressions on the public mind. As a minister of the New Connexion, I must beg the favour of using your valuable publication as the medium of reply. I am the more anxious that the few remarks I may offer should appear in the *Lantern*, because the evident design of the *Illuminator* is so to prejudice the members of the Association, as to prevent them from either joining the New Connexion, or adopting its principles. Disclaiming, as I do, any peculiar zeal for proselytism, I, nevertheless, most fervently hope that the Association will, under the direction of Providence, be prevented from ever forming a new denomination; but should they, finding their re-union with the Wesleyans impracticable, have to determine with what sect of Methodists they shall be identified, I should wish the New Connexion to stand on fair ground, and to possess a claim to approval at least equal to what may be advanced by other parties.

The first of these attacks appeared in the fourth number of the *Illuminator*. At page 52, the writer, alluding to lay delegation, observes, that "the most recent trial of this union of the secular and pastoral character in the government of the church has been made by the Methodist New Connexion." This short sentence contains two egregious blunders;—1st, The new Connexion has never made any trial of uniting the secular and pastoral character in the government of the church. Their trial has been the separation and distinction of these two characters, and the assignment to each of their respective offices and duties. This has been done by the appointment of *lay treasurers* to their funds; by giving to the supporters of those funds a voice in the disbursement and management of them; and thus, by such arrangements, relieving the ministers from those anxieties and burdens which are unfriendly to the pastoral character. Those are properly chargeable with making "trial of this union of the secular and pastoral character," whose system requires from their ministers the performance of secular duties, and gives to these ministers that extensive and absolute control over the temporal affairs of the church, which necessarily causes considerable distraction of mind, and often compels them to be employed "in serving tables" when they ought to be "giving themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 2d. The system of the New Connexion is not the "*most recent trial*," &c.

The writer forgot that, since the division of 1797, the Primitive Methodists have come into existence: their first Conference was held, I believe, in 1820, and is constituted of one-third preachers and two-thirds laymen. At their late Conference, their numbers were 56,000.

Having committed these two blunders, neither of which is of a trifling nature, the writer proceeds to make a number of observations which, though rather complicated and self-contradictory, are made in those respectful and Christianlike terms which do credit to the temper and piety of the author. As these observations are too lengthy for quotation, it is necessary to state that they may be reduced to the following positions:—1st, That the progress of the New Connexion has not been equal to the expectations of its friends, nor proportioned to its resources and advantages as a community, especially when those advantages are put into competition with the difficulties experienced by the Messrs. Wesley in the commencement of their labours;—2nd, This slowness in the march of improvement is attributed to the want of zeal on the part of the advocates of the system;—3rd, This want of zeal is caused by the chilling influence of lay delegation,—at least if this charge be not directly made, it is most intelligibly insinuated. Now, if all these positions were conceded to the writer, he would not be furnished with a single argument against lay delegation. He might, from such a concession, prove a departure from principle, but he could not prove the unsoundness of the principle itself. One great object of lay delegation is co-operation with the ministers, the encouragement of their efforts, and the promotion of their usefulness. This, I maintain, is a professed, an essential principle in lay delegation. The soundness of such a principle cannot be questioned. If the lay delegates of the New Connexion have so exerted their influence as to discourage the efforts and hinder the usefulness of their ministers, then it is evident, not that their principles are unsound, but that they have wickedly departed from those principles, yea, acted in direct opposition to them. If we were to admit that the New Connexion laymen have misapplied and abused the power vested in them, it would be no proof that they have no scriptural right to that power: the abuse of a thing is no argument against the use of it; and if abandonment of the principles of a system is to be considered as an argument against the system itself, why, then, Christianity must be given up as utterly indefensible. I wish it to be understood that I only *suppose* these concessions to be made for argument sake. I do not make them in reality.

To object to a religious community on account of the slowness of its progress, and the fewness of its numbers, is to adopt a principle, which, if carried out, would be productive of the most appalling consequences. On this principle Protestantism must be abandoned, and Popery must become the object of our preference; yea, Christianity itself must be rejected, and Paganism must hold a dark and terrific dominion over our minds.

The writer is unwilling to compare the progress of the New Connexion with that of the Wesleyans from the year 1797, but prefers making the comparison between the whole of their progress, and that of the first thirty-eight years of the Wesleyans, and as the success which attended the labours of Mr. Wesley during that period, was threefold a numerical amount to that which has attended the labours of the New Connexion ministers, it is triumphantly inferred that the latter system is essentially wrong, and the former essentially right. This inference appears to the writer to be more strikingly obvious on account of the disadvantages under which the Wesleys founded Methodism, and the decided advantages under which the New Connexion commenced its existence. It is to be remembered that at the time the Wesleys began their labours, the gospel was scarcely known, they therefore entered on unoccupied and unbroken ground; their efforts had a strangeness which attracted notice, whilst the doctrines which they preached had all the charm and freshness of novelty; persecution did but rouse them to additional activity, and inspire them with fresh ardour; and though the formation of a new society had necessarily its difficulties, yet the simplicity, affection, and faith of the new converts conquered every obstacle, and gave permanency to every means of discipline. When the division of 1797 took place, it could, of course, only originate in those districts where the ground was already occupied. The doctrines which the ministers of the New Connexion had to promulgate, had now no novelty to recommend them. It is true that at the end of the first year they had nineteen ministers, but these had to supply five thousand members, who were scattered through extensive districts of country, including Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Bolton, Hanley, Nottingham, Hull, Epworth, and Sheffield. I know not

how "numerous" their chapels were; but this is certain, that, for want of chapels, they were seriously embarrassed; and many, seeing the difficulties and responsibilities connected with obtaining new places of worship, abandoned their principles and returned to the Old Connexion. Had the prejudice and opposition which they met with been manifested only by the ungodly, they would, doubtless, have triumphed over the efforts of persecution; but their bitterest enemies were the professing people of God, and their most determined persecutors were amongst the followers of Christ. It is true their persons were not often exposed to insult, nor were injuries inflicted on them by the hand of the ruffian;—but their characters were every where defamed, their principles were maligned; they were called Jacobinical and revolutionary, and at that period no epithets could be applied to them which could more deeply sink them in public estimation, or which could more effectually render them the objects of universal odium and abhorrence. Discouraged and overwhelmed by the reproaches cast upon them, they felt their energies to be paralyzed, and, under such circumstances, they very probably trusted to the purity of their motives and to the excellence of their principles for that success, which is only to be secured by united and persevering exertion. Moreover, the pecuniary resources possessed by the Wesleyans, the superior talent of many of their ministers, together with the popularity of their political principles, all conspired to give them advantages with which it was impossible to compete, and which, with other causes, account for the predominance they maintained, and which, with the facts above-mentioned, were sufficient to keep the New Connexion in a depressed and struggling condition. Who then, who calmly considers these matters, can feel surprised that the first thirty-eight years of Wesleyanism should be more prosperous than the first thirty years of the New Connexion? In a future number I will, if spared, notice the other attacks which the *Illuminator* has directed against us.—In the meantime I remain, dear Sir, yours, truly,

A. MINISTER OF THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION.

## ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

### LETTER III.

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."—*St. Paul.*

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In my preceding letters I adduced the precepts, the authority, and the example of the Lord Jesus Christ as uniting their testimony against the assumption of despotic power by the ministers of his church over the common rights and unalienable privileges of the members of that church, whose *servants*, and not their *masters*, those ministers ought to be. I shall now, with your permission, inquire for a moment how far the practice of the apostles, and their holy coadjutors, the evangelists, pastors, and presbyters of the primitive churches, corresponded with the principles laid down, and the conduct enjoined by their and our common Lord and Master, in reference to the important object which forms the subject of our present discussion, as it is certain that their practice is the highest exemplary authority to which we can appeal, as the regulating standard of ecclesiastical government, through all ages, and in every clime wherein the Gospel of Christ is destined to become the power of God unto the salvation of men.

But, Sir, even our appeal to this high standard must be subject to some degree of modification, corresponding with the different circumstances, and the consequent peculiar powers which characterized the apostolical churches, and which so far distinguish them from those of their successors, that the example will not, in every instance, be binding upon us. For the first establishment of Christianity its apostolic ambassadors were invested with extraordinary powers, and their commissions were issued by a direct process from the courts of heaven, bearing the stamp of infallibility, the seal of the Holy Spirit, and the sacred signature, *in his own blood*, of the immaculate Son of God. Armed with these awful insignia of divine authority, the apostles were sent forth to subdue the powers of darkness, supported, as they were, by their legitimate and powerful agents, "the world, the flesh, and the devil;" and leaving the political institu-



tions of the world as they found them, they proceeded to establish, not a papacy, but an internal kingdom of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," in the hearts of the children of men. In the prosecution of this mighty object, those "ambassadors of the most High God" had dominion even over human life consigned to them,\* with power over unclean spirits, and were duly authorized to enact such fundamental rules for the government and discipline of the churches they planted, as, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and with the concurrence of the churches themselves, were adapted to cement their happy union, and perpetuate their increasing prosperity. But, Sir, with all this latitude of power, even the apostles of Christ possessed not, nor did they ever attempt to usurp, the right of control over the consciences of their disciples. Under the benign influence of that divine wisdom, whose operations were uniformly directed by "perfect love," they *proposed* to the churches placed under their care, those salutary regulations, which, dictated by the Holy Spirit, *commended themselves* and their agents *to the consciences* of those for whose benefit alone they were called into operation; and one of these apostles himself assures us that this wisdom was "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits—without partiality, and without hypocrisy." But in no instance do we ever find the apostles, even with all their plenitude of power, *imposing* upon the members of Christ's mystical body either laws, rules, or regulations, *ex officio*, which had not the sanction of that body's cordial concurrence and approbation; and the reason was obvious:—These holy men of God sought not their own ease, emolument, or aggrandizement; but in all their enactments they had a single eye to the glory of God, and the safety and prosperity of the churches committed to their care in the Lord.

The apostolical institutions all flowed from, were based in, and, of course, corresponded, both in principle and in operation, with the harmonizing "law of love," which, as it pervaded their hearts, also directed and governed all their conduct. The character of this heaven-born principle is admirably delineated by St. Paul in his first epistle to the Church at Corinth (chap. xiii.); and upon a close examination of all those institutions we shall easily trace the love of God and man, as the inspiring *animus* of all their regulations. With these self-denying founders of Christianity, the *sic volo sic jubeo* system had no kind of existence; and, without surrendering an *iota* of their real evangelical supremacy, as, under God, the primary guardians of the flock, they gladly availed themselves of the wisdom and piety of the body over the safety and tranquillity of which they presided, in the regulation and management of all its concerns, whether these related to the spiritual prosperity, or the secular interests of the community. Thus we find this tranquillizing principle brought into successful operation on the very first appearance of dissatisfaction in the body. The case to which I allude is recorded in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles;—it arose out of the partiality of the native converts to the widows of their own nation, whose wants they supplied out of the general fund, more liberally than those of the Hellenistic converts born in foreign parts. Now, this being, in fact, a secular concern, the apostles felt that it would be a degradation of their spiritual character, and a criminal perversion of their time and talents, were they to "leave the ministration of the word of God and serve tables." And hence, with strict propriety—with a noble contempt of all *pecuniary* power and "influence," and, in this respect, setting an illustrious example to *Methodist preachers*,—"they called the multitude of the disciples unto them;" and pleading the dignity and importance of the ministerial function as the reason of the arrangement, they gladly exonerated themselves from the distracting cares of these "money transactions," and committed them exclusively to the deacons or stewards of the connexion. By this important act the apostles, deprecating the office of Judas, (who, while he "carried the bag," that is, was the purse-bearer of the society, was induced to pilfer its contents, and, for the iniquitous gain thereof, ultimately to betray his master, break up the Christian association in its first stage of existence, and sell his own soul to the devil;) and determined to avoid every step towards that horrible gulf of perdition, *the monopoly of power and property in a Christian community*, established, both by their precept and example, the principle, that in a pure church of Christ its ministers can have nothing to do with the management of its public funds without compromising their sacred characters, neglecting their most

\* Witness the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, for the destruction, and Dorcas and Eutychus, for the restoration of human life, recorded in "The Acts of the Apostles."

important duties, and being dangerously tempted to betray, if not *the person*, at least *the cause*, of their Divine Master into the hands of its enemies.

Now let it be observed, that in this leading and exemplary transaction the apostles committed the selection of the deacons to the whole church, "the multitude of the disciples," who accordingly chose them from amongst their own body, and set them before the apostles; who, having no favouritism to gratify, no self-interests to warp their judgments or influence their decision, and no wish to monopolize either wealth or secular power, at once confirmed *the choice of the people*, and thus laid at rest the very first symptoms of discontent which had threatened to disturb the peace of the infant church of Christ.

In the 15th chapter of the Acts we have a distinct account of the first "APOSTOLICAL CONFERENCE," which was held in Jerusalem, on a special and important occasion, and we find that it was attended by "lay delegates," as well as by the "travelling preachers," Paul and Barnabas, from Antioch, (verse 2;) that it was composed of "the church, the apostles, and elders," (verse 4 to 12;) and that its final decision of the points at issue was the conjunctive act of "the apostles and elders *with the whole church*," by whose combined authority, and (under the special influence and direction of the Holy Ghost) in the name of "the apostles and elders and (lay) brethren," the enactments of that assembly were authorized and despatched to the Gentile churches of "Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia," with a recommendation for their universal adoption. (See verses 22, 23, 25, 28, 29.)

This high and decisive authority establishes, upon an immutable basis, the principle of lay delegation, conjunctive lay legislation and lay co-operation, in all the branches of church government; and as far as primitive Christianity can triumph over the sophistry of Jesuitical chicanery, and the arrogant assumptions of ecclesiastical despotism, so far the victory in favour of lay legislation in the churches of Christianity is complete and impregnable: and hence it is clear that, in the prohibition of this important privilege, the inherent right of the people, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, in the administration of its truly despotic government, assumes a position in direct hostility to the practice of the apostolical churches, and exercises a self-assumed authority which bids defiance to that of the Son of God, who both prohibits and condemns all dictatorial supremacy amongst his faithful and obedient followers.

Here then we may clearly perceive both the essential difference between the apostolical institutions and those of "Wesleyan Methodism *as it is*," with the true and proper character of the latter developed in the following summary:

1.—The apostles were the *servants* of the churches, over whose eternal interests they watched, as their faithful guardians; whereas Wesleyan Methodist preachers are the *masters* of the churches, over which they assume and exercise an unauthorized and irresponsible power, destructive of the peace, and subversive of the rights of the people.

2.—The apostles, influenced by the grace, and guided by the Spirit of God, *proposed*, and enacted, only by the full consent and cordial concurrence of the people who composed their churches, the most judicious, salutary, and harmonizing regulations that could be devised for their prosperity and peace; whereas the Methodist Conference, despising the plain injunctions of the word of God, and disdaining to consult either the interests or the wishes of the people, *imposes* upon its subjugated followers laws of the most despotic character, in the framing of which the people have neither voice nor influence, nay, nor even the knowledge of their enactments, until called to obey them.

3.—The holy apostles would have nothing to do with "the Mammon of unrighteousness," nor at all intermeddle with the pecuniary resources or secular concerns of their churches; whereas the preachers who compose the Methodist Conference, in their attention to this Mammon, too frequently forget their sacred office. To it, and to the interdicted "friendship" of that "world" which openly worships it, *and which they are now courting with the most fulsome adulation*, those preachers are recklessly sacrificing the piety and tranquillity of the Connexion *by wholesale*.\* From the testimony of these indubitable, but most lamentable facts, the unhappy conclusion is unavoidable, that "WESLEYAN METHODISM, *as it is*," that is to say, as it now exists in both the spirit of its laws and the administration of its government and discipline, is diametrically opposed to the precepts of Christ and the practice of his apostles.

\* "Silver and gold have I none," exclaimed one apostle, when about to heal a cripple; and "To this day we both hunger and thirst, and are denuded, and have no certain dwelling-place, and labour, *working with our hands*," cried another, as his "outward man perished" under the toil of his body and the energetic exertions of his mind, in the progress of his arduous undertaking; and "Know ye not," writes a third, "that the friendship of this world is enmity with God?"

Painful and degrading as these statements are, and desirable as it would be to cover them over with "the mantle of love," if that were consistent with the duty and interests of the Connexion, yet wisdom, truth, and integrity, yea, and *love itself*, demand their exposure, condemnation, and correction; in full conformity with both the commandments and the practice of the apostles of Christianity, whose pious zeal taught them to aim the most piercing shafts of their corrective power at the vices and corruptions of the churches over which they presided; and more especially at those of their professed teachers, wherever the buddings of that pride, sensuality, accursed "love of money," and spiritual despotism, which ultimately transformed *Christianity* into *Popery*, first made their appearance.

You see, Sir, how this prolific subject swells and expands itself as we advance in its investigation, insomuch that I am reluctantly compelled, by the unexpected length to which this letter has already extended, again to pause, and suspend the conclusion of my observations till your ensuing publication shall afford me the opportunity of once more resuming it. In fact, Sir, my work is but *half done*, for it yet remains to prove, and try by the standard tests already laid down, in a somewhat detailed form, some at least of the most glaring instances of that spirit of encroachment, and tendency to corruption, latent in the constitution of "Wesleyan Methodism," as those *seeds of its destruction* are sprouting up in the *overt acts* of the Conference; after which the chief points of defence assumed and pleaded by the *illuminating* advocate of all those abominations shall be taken up, dissected, and their fallacy proved, before the final sentence of this "court of conscience" can be pronounced. Sir, the awful JUDGE is on the BENCH, the jury is impanelled, the law is laid down, the culprit is at the bar, and the witnesses are in the box. But we must adjourn the court. Therefore, with your permission, I will now say, *set omne in statu quo*, until *The Watchman's Lantern* shall again summon us to the HALL OF JUSTICE.—Meantime I remain, as before,

Very respectfully yours,

THEOPHILUS.

#### ADJOURNED MEETING OF WESLEYAN DELEGATES.

We beg to call the attention of our readers, and particularly of the delegates, to the following important document :

At a Provisional Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, lately held at Manchester, "for the purpose of deliberating upon the grievances which have lately oppressed and disturbed the Methodist body, with the view of devising measures of redress based upon a reformation of the Methodist Church," the following general principle was adopted :—

"That the basis of a plan for the reformation of existing abuses in Methodism, shall be the principle of the right of interference on the part of the members of the church, in the regulation of all its affairs;" which, with sundry propositions founded thereupon, has been officially laid before the public.

The Central Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Association have now to announce that an adjourned meeting of delegates will be held at Sheffield in July next, for the purpose of negotiating with the Conference upon a plan of reformation, based upon the said general principle; and it is respectfully requested, that the delegates who may attend, will come prepared to state the sentiments of their respective constituents as to the extent to which the said principle should be carried out, and as to the mode of its application.

The delegates are further desired to furnish themselves with credential letters, signed by the chairman or secretaries of the Branch Associations, or by official persons in the circuits they represent. It is also requested that the said letters may contain an account, as nearly as can be ascertained, of the total number of persons on whose behalf they appear, mentioning also how many of the number are trustees, stewards, leaders, or local preachers.

It was agreed upon at the Manchester meeting, that each Circuit or Branch Association should be limited to two representatives. It is hoped, however, that every circuit will, if possible, send representatives; but where this is found to be impracticable, it is particularly requested that the above-mentioned statistical information may be transmitted *by post* to the secretary.

Timely notice will be given of the day fixed for the delegates to assemble, and, at the same time, such instructions as may be necessary for their guidance on arrival in Sheffield.

There is no foundation in the New Testament for the exercise of independent and irresponsible power on the part of the ministers of the gospel. The Methodist Conference, in its assemblies and by its representatives in the circuits since the year 1827, has assumed and exercised an unscriptural authority; a fact which the members of that body do not deny, but publicly maintain their *right* thereto, insinuating that it is sufficient for them to be "responsible to God." The pious Hooker remarked, that "in none of the weighty affairs of government, even Bishops of old were wont to do any thing without consent of the people." It has been observed, "that all the arrangements of business, in every community and in every scheme of government which was ever formed by human skill, go on the plan of making it for the *interest* of men to do right, and not on the plan of confidence in the *integrity* and *moral principle* of their hearts;" and that "a government and system of institutions based on the idea that men are, in a majority of cases, disposed to do their duty of their own accord, cannot stand a day." The decline of the Christian church began from the very period of the assumption of superior powers by ministers of the gospel, and the safety of Methodism is now painfully jeopardised by circumstances equally detrimental to preachers and to people. It is considered but fair and equitable, that, whilst the church professes its unwillingness to do any thing without the consent of its ministers, its ministers should be equally unwilling to do any thing without the consent of the church. Those who think that an increase of spirituality, zeal, and devotedness to God on the part of Methodist ministers, rather than academical embellishments, is required to bring back Methodism to its primitive efficacy and power; those who hold it essential to maintain the religious rights which Christianity gives them, and who perceive that in the present Methodistical dispute the appeal must naturally lie to the *people*,—the Conference being the interested party,—are respectfully urged to make public declaration of their sentiments, to co-operate with their brethren in the defence of those liberties which are essential to the well-being of the church, and to do so especially by deputing delegates to represent them at the proposed meeting at Sheffield.

WILLIAM SMITH, Chairman.

WILLIAM WOOD, Secretary.

Manchester, June 18, 1835.

### SUSPENSION OF MR. ROBERT EMMETT.

The *Christian Advocate* of the 15th ult. contains an account of the trial and suspension of Mr. Emmett, from the Wesleyan Methodist ministry, by the preachers of the Darlington District Meeting, held in that town, May 27, 1835, and the three following days. We regret that our limits prevent us from giving even an outline of this very interesting trial, reported by Mr. Emmett himself, under peculiar difficulties. A public man of honest intentions, like Mr. Emmett, courts inquiry, and wishes his actions to be inspected with the most scrupulous diligence. It is only abettors of despotism, whose proceedings will not bear the light, that shut themselves up in a darkened chamber, and exclude the rays of popular scrutiny.

Mr. Emmett was charged by his superintendent, Mr. Sumner, the chairman, who suddenly discovered the impropriety of remaining in the chair, and thus being "both witness, accuser, and judge," with publicly advocating opinions opposed to "Methodism as it is," especially in regard to the following particulars:—In deciding all cases of suspension, or removal from office, and all expulsions of members, by majorities of votes; in opening official meetings for the discussion of all subjects; in making the decisions of quarterly meetings, in all cases, to be final; in interposing lay influence between the Conference and its own members, to prevent the exercise of discipline, by demanding that all cases of accusations against travelling preachers, which may require to be investigated before the meeting of Conference, shall be referred to a meeting composed of the preachers in the district, and the trustees, leaders, and stewards of the circuit in which the accused preacher is stationed; in demanding lay delegation in the Conference, &c. &c.

Mr. Emmett demanded the privilege of a trial according to the fifth clause of the Articles of Pacification. He then stated, that the conviction of his mind, that he was entitled to such a trial, was not at all shaken by the decision of the Lord Chancellor in the case of Dr. Warren; and that, in his (Mr. Emmett's) opinion, as well as in that of other preachers, though the Chancellor decided against the Doctor's claim, he had never yet answered his own objections, which he had forcibly urged against the opposite counsel, who had disputed the Doctor's right to such a trial. This was overruled; and after a stormy discussion of three days' duration, it was at length decided, "That brother Emmett holds principles inconsistent with Methodism," &c. and was required "to give a pledge to the meeting that he will abandon his present line of conduct," &c. Mr. Emmett refused to comply, and was therefore suspended till the Conference.

The following are Mr. Emmett's concluding remarks:—



"My object in presenting the public with the preceding report, is not to complain of the treatment I have met with. I have not been dealt with more harshly than many others, who have suffered in consequence of the part which they have taken in endeavouring to check, and put an effectual stop to, a system of lawless aggression on the just, reasonable, and Christian rights of our people. I know well that the preachers who tried me could not have come to any other conclusion than the one they did adopt, without acting at variance with the present mode of administering Methodism. I find *no fault*, therefore, with the district meeting: it is with the system I am at variance, and with a few preachers at its head, who have unhappily acquired such an overwhelming influence, as to overturn the just rights of a large section of the Christian church.

"*It is possible* there may be *some*, not *many*, slight inaccuracies in this account. I have had a difficult duty to perform; but I have done every thing which I could to avoid even the slightest mistake. I have laboured after verbal accuracy, in reporting the observations of the preachers, and have not given the *slightest colouring* to any part of the proceedings of this extraordinary trial. I presented to the district meeting, on the morning of the second day of its proceedings, a copy of my report for its examination and correction; but not one preacher would even look at it; the chairman simply observing, 'You have your report and we have ours.'

"I afterwards waited on Mr. Sumner at his own house (in company with a gentleman) to whom I presented a full report of the proceedings of the meeting, that any errors, which by possibility might have crept in, might be corrected; but he met my offer with a positive refusal. I then requested that at any rate he would favour me with a correct copy of the judgment of the meeting; but to this he would not accede. I may be driven to state my reasons at full length for having *taken the various steps I have done* to give the public a report *which could not be contradicted*: at present I forbear.

"If there is one part of the details of this trial less minute than another, it is in reporting the details of the second morning's proceedings before breakfast, in which was displayed by a *few* individuals a warmth of temper of which I complained; but I afterwards observed a marked difference, and nothing of *moment* occurred either before or after that period of which I had cause to complain.

"I beg to state that I have no personal quarrel with the Conference, or with any preacher: I wish well to them all; and if the part which I have taken in the present controversy induces any one to form the opinion that I am an enemy to the preachers, *I solemnly declare that such opinion is incorrect*. I am an *enemy*—a determined enemy—a relentless enemy—to the *despotic, arbitrary, unjust, and unscriptural* mode which has latterly obtained of administering Methodism. Its doctrines, its ordinances, and its general discipline, I love as well as ever; but its form of church government is to my mind more odious, and tyrannical, and degrading, than any system of which I ever read or heard, and almost than my imagination can conceive. In the quarrel which is now going on between the preachers and the people, between scriptural and anti-scriptural principles, between light and darkness, I feel perfectly easy as to its final result; nor can I doubt for a moment to which side victory will finally be awarded. I confess my satisfaction would be much increased if all those individuals in our Connexion whose views are similar to my own on the great subject of Methodistical reform would take a decided part. How they can remain neutral, or offer a cold support, which to my mind is more chilling than decided opposition, I leave for them to explain, only observing, *they have a duty* to perform in this great emergency, for the right discharge of which they are responsible to posterity, to the whole Connexion, to the Conference itself, and to God. In conducting this struggle, with others, to a happy and I hope successful issue, it is my earnest prayer that I may be preserved from every unholy feeling, that I may not make use of a reproachful word to my opponents, and that all who have embarked or who shall hereafter embark in the same cause, may enter upon it with seriousness, carry it on with circumspection, and come out of it without having sustained any spiritual loss.

**MAY GOD DEFEND THE RIGHT!**

"In conclusion, I beg to state that I am *now* as warm and decided an advocate for lay delegation, *not in principle but in practice*, as any one can possibly be. One reason alone I shall now state why I am so, namely, no man's character can be *long safe* without it. Those preachers who call to recollection the free remarks which are too often made, both in district meetings and conferences, on the character, conduct, and motives of absent lay friends, will understand what I mean. I would shout with a VOICE AS LOUD AS THUNDER, 'STOP NOT SHORT OF LAY DELEGATION.' A word to the wise is sufficient."

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In consequence of a notice to correspondents in the last number of the *Illuminator*, I have this day written to the Reverend Editors, calling upon them to publish my "last." Having stated that they shall be "compelled" to do so in "self-defence," there now remains for them no other alternative. The sneer as to the *genus* of the writer displays no small portion of "*animal*" feeling on the part of the editors themselves. As it respects myself, it is quite innocuous; and I leave them to snarl and bite as they please,—for I contend for no control over the character or quality of their actions. As to any thing I have ever written, I am relieved from all apprehension of seeing it in print, for I have calumniated no man; I have injured no man; nor have I sought to invade the sacred precincts of a man's private character. I am most happy to think that the public will now have an opportunity of judging upon the question raised by the editors, whether my "last" letter contains most of "nonsense" or common sense to recommend itself to their approval or condemnation.—Yours, &c.

June 27, 1835.

IGNATIUS.

## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

**IMPORTANT!**—*York Wesleyan Society.*  
—We have been informed, that the Quarterly Meeting of the Wesleyan Methodists of York circuit, which took place on Tuesday last, was one of unusual interest to that community. A resolution condemnatory of the *Wesleyan Association* was proposed by Mr. Chadwick, upon which an amendment was moved by the Rev. J. Bromley, deprecating the present agitations of the Connexion, and recommending (if our informant has reported the terms correctly)—a serious, dispassionate, and prayerful inquiry, by the Conference, into the causes and cure of this great evil." Mr. Bromley argued that the Conference of 1795 had treated with a similar Association, and that the meeting then sitting was not sufficiently acquainted with the claims and operations of the Association, to warrant a vote of condemnation upon it. The resolution was carried by a small majority. Mr. Chadwick proposed a *second* resolution condemnatory of Dr. Warren and of his visit to York; and a *third* laudatory of the Conference, both of which passed by small majorities. It was urged against these resolutions, that the Articles of Pacification were not entered in the Conference journal, which entry is necessary to their having legal force. Mr. Bromley thought, that the Conference should be respectfully requested to explain the omission; but it was argued that such request implied a suspicion of Conference integrity! The Rev. Mr. Calder, who was chairman of the meeting, and the Rev. Mr. Felvus, attributed the omission to the *negligence* of the late Dr. Coke! We have, ourselves, referred to Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration, which deed, we understand is the *foundation* on which the Conference rests, and we find that the *fourteenth* enactment is in these words:—

"All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations, or appointments and acts whatever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the journals, as Minutes of the Conference, which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the President and Secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled; and when so entered and subscribed shall be had, taken, received, and be the acts of the Conference; and such entry and subscription, as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, received, and be evidence of all and every such acts of the said Conference, and of their said delegates, without the aid of any other proof; and *whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be the act of the Conference.*" We think, in the face of this clause, that the suggestion of Mr. Bromley had claim on attention.

The *fourth* resolution, also brought forward by Mr. Chadwick, was one which went to express disapprobation of the conduct of the Rev. J. Bromley, in having entertained Dr. Warren at his house! There was an amendment upon this proposed by Mr. Joshua Peart, expressive of respect to Mr. Bromley, and of a hope that nothing would occur to prevent his appointment to the York circuit a third year. It appeared from Mr. Bromley's statements that he was on terms of friendship with Dr. Warren, had been a guest with him, and that although he (Mr. Bromley) had not thought it his duty to attend the meeting which Dr. Warren had held in the Music-hall, he by no means conceived that he was called upon to deny the rites of hospitality to him; the more especially as he is yet a Methodist preacher! The amendment proposed by Mr. Josh.

Peart was carried, but only by a majority of two! and we are sorry to learn, that in consequence of the very large minority on this motion Mr. Bromley has, since the quarterly meeting, forwarded his resignation to the circuit stewards, *i. e.*, if we understand the matter right, it is his intention to leave the York circuit at the approaching Conference! This issue of the affair will be regretted.

The last resolution brought forward by Mr. Chadwick, was one containing a threat of expulsion from the Methodist Society of such persons as should connect themselves with the Association. Mr. Bromley argued very strongly against this resolution, as of a mischievous tendency. He stated that in Liverpool and Manchester, expulsions on that ground were discontinued, and expressed a fear that too many were *loosening* in their hold upon the Society, and needed not a menace of that kind to drive them away. An amendment to this motion, in the form of a *memorial* to Conference was proposed by Mr. John Taylor, but the chairman *absolutely forbid* any discussion whatever on the topics mentioned in this memorial!!! The original motion was then withdrawn, and the meeting concluded.

This, as far as we can collect, is the simple outline of the proceedings. For ourselves, we are of opinion that these *extreme* measures are anything but judicious, and that without a greater degree of mutual forbearance, not only the peace, but the very *existence* of the Wesleyan Societies is jeopardized!—*Yorkshire Gazette, June 27.*

*Carlisle.*—The Tabernacle was opened on Sunday last, by the Rev. Dr. Warren, and was crowded to excess. Particulars have not yet reached us.

*Dudley.*—Mr. Rowe was found guilty of not supporting his superintendent, and recommended to be censured at the Conference.

*Liverpool.*—Rev. Geo. Marsden and Mr. Joseph Hiles.—We are authorized to state that the account of the conversation between these gentlemen, which appeared in our last, is perfectly correct. Mr. Hiles did *not* pay Mr. Marsden the quarterage, and receive the ticket, *before* he avowed himself a member of the Association, as falsely stated by the *Illuminator*. Not wishing his Reverence to be deceived as to the number of the preachers' friends, Mr. Hiles fully explained why he scrupled to accept the offered ticket; and Mr. Marsden must have previously known, from many circumstances, that Mr. Hiles was not likely to abandon the Association. If the *Illuminator* should repeat the falsehood, Mr. Hiles will

substantiate the above, on the authority of the class who were present when the conversation took place. It would save us a good deal of trouble if our contemporary would bear in remembrance the ninth Commandment.

*Wrexham.*—The following correspondence took place some time since, between the Rev. Mr. Griffith, superintendent of this circuit, and several of the local preachers:—

*Wrexham, April 15, 1835.*

J. G.'s respects to Mr. Russell, and send this to say, that not seeing you on Sunday I am constrained to write to inform you that your being on our next Plan depends,

1.—On your acknowledging that you have done wrong. 2.—On your promising to keep our laws for the future.

A line by the bearer in answer to this, if you please, as it is time the Plan was printed.

*Mr. J. Russell, Cefn.*

SIR,—After mature consideration we have come to the following conclusion in answer to your note:—

Were we to comply with your first condition it would involve a compromise of principles founded on reason, justice, and Scripture, and incur the heavy penalty of the Almighty's frown, the accusations of conscience, and the disapprobation of every liberal-minded Methodist; evils more to be dreaded than a continuance on your plan is to be desired, we therefore decline complying with that condition.

As it regards the second, we know not what answer to give; we are, we confess, ignorant of the precise nature of your laws: their inconsistency, their ambiguity, their inexplicability is such, we are not aware when we are observing, or when we are transgressing them. Perhaps after Conference, when the expected revision of them appears, we may be then in a situation to comply with your second proposition. As a matter of opinion, it would have been much more desirable for us to have gone on as amicably as possible till Conference. It is premature to want a settlement now. This we say for the benefit of the circuit generally. Us you cannot injure. We seek no division: if you will thrust us out we cannot help it; the consequences you must abide. Signed by several Brethren.

*Mr. Griffith.*

*Liverpool.*—On the 25th ult. the quarterly meeting of the Liverpool South Circuit was held at Mount-pleasant Vestry. After the preliminary business was transacted, a memorial to the Conference was brought forward by the circuit stewards. This memorial, we are informed, seemed to exhaust the entire vocabulary of abusive epithets in reference to the Association, and, at length, after eulogizing in the warmest terms the conduct of the preachers, and extolling the system of Methodism *as it is* to the skies, most marvellously concluded by humbly petitioning the Conference to revise and

amend the laws relating to the societies!! to determine the particular officers who legally constitute the quarterly meetings; to enact that, after a certain probationary period, these persons should have a right to vote on all questions brought before the meeting; that the superintendent preacher should, from time to time, inquire from each member whether his views of the Methodist discipline continued the same as when he was first admitted a member of the meeting; and to enlarge the period within which the quarterly meetings are entitled to express an humble opinion, respecting any new laws, from the September to the December meeting. This memorial, worded in a most ferocious, anti-Christian phraseology, was warmly supported by Mr. Michael Ashton, the preachers' man-of-all-work, and several others; and as warmly opposed by Messrs. M'Farlane, Hughes, and, we believe, one or two others, "amongst the faithless, faithful only they," who protested strongly against the abuse lavished on the Association, stating that they knew well many of its leading members, and could bear their testimony, that the character given to them was false and undeserved. After considerable discussion, the memorial was carried without a division.

Mr. Gray, sen. hitherto one of the staunchest supporters of the preachers in all their violent proceedings, then stood forward, and stated that his mind had been much pained by certain occurrences which had recently taken place, and distressing as it was to him, he had no alternative left but of resigning the whole of the offices which he sustained in the Methodist society. He then tendered his class-book, local preachers' plan, &c. The occurrences to which Mr. Gray alluded are, we believe, the following:—Certain trustees of Stanhope-street Chapel (several of them not members of society) considering that that the poor despised local preachers, not having had the benefit of a theological institution, were not competent to hold forth the word of life in the ears polite of the refined congregation worshipping there, had, through the Rev. Geo. Marsden, transmitted a prohibition to the local preachers' meeting, forbidding any local preacher in future officiating in that chapel on Sabbath afternoons, as they had been up to that time accustomed to do. The local preachers' meeting, of course, took the matter in high dudgeon, and one of the results is stated above.

*Dr. Clarke.*—We are now in possession of unquestionable evidence, which proves

beyond dispute, the fact mentioned in page 128 of the *Lantern*. Dr. Clarke said to his friends in Birmingham, in speaking of the conduct of Conference, in 1828, in sanctioning what the Doctor repeatedly called the "infamous" Leeds affair, in 1827, that "the Conference had been employed so many days on the Devil's business, and they had done it as the Devil would have it." These were the Doctor's express words; there was no violation of confidence on the part of any person, and the fact was then known to many, whose names are now in our possession. We pledge ourselves for the truth of this statement.

*Isle of Man.*—A deputation from the Association having arrived in the Isle of Man, a few days since, on Wednesday evening last a sermon was preached in the Independent Chapel, Atholl-street, Douglas, by the Rev. James Lamb, a member of the Association. It having been announced in handbills that the same gentleman would preach in the Methodist Chapel, Castletown, on the afternoon of Thursday, in the course of the day a meeting of the trustees of that chapel took place, when a majority of them agreed in permitting Mr. Lamb to preach at the appointed time. Notwithstanding this permission, however, an opposition party had chained the iron gates leading to the chapel to prevent the entrance of the preacher and his friends; the result of which was, that several of the trustees and leaders enrolled their names as members of the Association. After these proceedings, the town's bellman announced to the inhabitants that the intended sermon would be preached in the Independent Chapel at three o'clock, and a lecture delivered in the Primitive Methodist Chapel in the evening. At the appointed hours both places of worship were crowded to excess with very orderly and attentive hearers. In the course of the lecture, the rev. gentleman entered into a full detail of the oppressive system adopted by the Conference party, in the expulsion of many hundreds of the Methodist body without cause, and in defiance of justice. It was intended that a lecture should be delivered in the Assembly Room in Douglas on Friday evening last, but in consequence of the service connected with the quarterly fast day it was postponed until Tuesday evening, to prevent any inconvenience to those who might wish to attend the lecture. The Rev. Mr. Lamb preached on Sunday morning in the Independent Chapel, Douglas, at eleven o'clock; and in the Independent Chapel, Castletown, at six o'clock in the evening.



## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Amicus*, after quoting the well-known saying, "Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just," &c proceeds in a strain rather desponding, and certainly not warranted by the actual position of the parties. "I must suggest," said the Lord Chancellor, in pronouncing judgment on Dr. Warren's case, "whether it would not be advisable to make some endeavour, for the interests of this society, by some attempts towards accommodation, to put an end to those dissensions which have given rise to the present proceedings." Now let us suppose that the approaching Conference, forgetful of, or disdainfully rejecting, the judicious advice so oft and emphatically given both by the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chancellor, should refuse to meet the delegates on fair and reasonable terms, and that in consequence thereof the Association be driven to a continuance of the present system of agitation for another twelve months, let our correspondent contemplate the great and manifold advantages which would result to the Association. Thousands now in a state of neutrality, and thousands desirous of reform, but who have not yet openly avowed their sentiments, disgusted with the proud refusal of the preachers, would, in this event, join the ranks of the Association: the rich individuals, who have recently contributed large sums in order to make up the defalcation occasioned by the reformers, could scarcely be expected to furnish such extra sums for any length of time, (and, in some instances, we suspect it would neither be prudent nor convenient to do so,) whilst the Conference claims upon them, under various heads, would necessarily increase; and the trustees of chapels would become alarmed, and sensible of their real situation. On the other hand, plans for the furtherance of the cause of reformation being already organized, places of worship provided, the people supplied with ample means of grace, and the various departments of the system occupied by those who have already had some experience in the discharge of their respective duties, the expenses of the Association would necessarily be less than heretofore, and the number of contributors to its funds greatly augmented. Under these circumstances, a protracted system of agitation would be infinitely less irksome to the people than to the preachers, whilst the cause of religious liberty, as in 1795 and in 1797, would rapidly increase by the extensive publicity which would be given to the sufferings of the people and the tyranny of the preachers. Considering what has been done during the last six months, it is evident that the Association, with its increased means, would have the power, in less than twelve months, of making the merits of the controversy familiar to every member of the Connexion; and experience has shown that the cause of the people is won when generally known. Besides, *Amicus* may rest assured that Dr. Bunting is too wily a politician not to calculate on the popular, powerful, and influential effects which the two great measures of church and corporation reform, now in progress, must produce in the public mind, and, consequently, in the ultimate decision of the people on the Wesleyan controversy.

Mr. Vint, of Sunderland, has addressed a letter to the *Christian Advocate* denying the truth of the conversation reported in the last *Lantern* but one to have taken place between him and that eminent (he might have said pre-eminent) divine the Rev. Samuel Jackson. As he admits in the same letter that a certain friend of Dr. Warren's asserts that he was present when the alleged conversation took place, any observations from us would be unnecessary. We have no wish to detract from the respectability or usefulness of Mr. Vint, but for any thing we know to the contrary, "Dr. Warren's friend" is as worthy of belief as Mr. Vint himself. We would gently remark *en passant* to the editor of the Sunderland paper, in which the contradiction also appeared, that "the penny trumpet of the *Watchman's Lantern*"—as he is pleased to designate us—may, perhaps, give as certain a note of alarm as his sevenpenny one, albeit it may not sound quite so much like the braying of an ass.

THE PROPOSED NEW CHAPEL.—The editor of the *Illuminator*, in a laboured reply to our correspondent *Oliver*, works hard to prove that no promise was ever given to return the money to the subscribers. He has, himself, however, furnished us with a sufficient proof of our former statement. The 7th resolution provides that "the money shall be returned to the subscribers" when the managers see no probability of raising the sum of £1000. Plain and upright men would suppose that this probability must have reference to some definite period within which the £1000 was to be obtained. Did not the subscribers give their money conditionally, with the understanding that the chapel was to be erected within some reasonable time or the money returned to them? Or were they disinterested enough to pay their cash upon the mere probability that some century hence there might be a chance of carrying the plan into execution? Who are the managers the *Illuminator* speaks of? are they not the preachers or the preachers' appointees? The idea of calling the subscribers together and appointing a regular committee, or of consulting the subscribers at all, would indeed be something "new in Methodism." There is no end to the miserable subterfuges resorted to by interested controvertists, who seem incapable of taking a straight-forward, honest view of any question; but let the public judge what must be the principles of a writer who calls the returning of a subscription, when the conditions are not carried into effect, "a sacrilegious reward!" We have a very simple reply to the long list of silly queries of the *Illuminator*—we ask for the money to be returned on the principles of common honesty.

THE WATCHMAN.—The preachers took great pains to convince the public that they had nothing to do with the management of this newspaper;—"a number of lay gentlemen," they said, "had resolved to take upon themselves the charge and risk of the publication." The *Watchman*, however, slumbering at his post, "let the cat out of the bag;" and, in his last number, informs "the Preachers that his half-yearly accounts will be collected at the Conference." Will the preachers be kind enough to collect the half-yearly accounts of the *Watchman's Lantern*?

Reflector, and several other articles in type, are unavoidably postponed.

We also have to acknowledge T. C. Carlisle, *Seek Truth*, *Theophilus*, S. T., and communications from the Isle of Man and Liverpool.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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**No. 19.**      **WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1835.**      **Price 2d.**

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INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE REV. ROBT. AITKEN, FROM  
THE ISLE OF MAN, AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE  
ASSOCIATION.

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On Tuesday evening, June 30th, the Rev. R. Aitken, from the Isle of Man, met, by appointment, several of the committee and class-leaders of the Association. Mr. Aitken opened the conference by wishing to know what were the objects of the Association. He had come to meet them entirely on his own responsibility, but feeling exceedingly for the disturbed state of the Connexion, and as he was remaining in England until the Conference, he felt a desire to bring the parties together, and endeavour to effect a reconciliation. He therefore wished to know the nature and plan of the reforms they were seeking. Mr. Aitken was here asked if he had been informed of the late meeting of the united committee at Newton, and of the resolutions there agreed to, to which he replied in the negative. Mr. D. Rowland then proceeded to detail the transactions at that meeting. (The resolutions will be found in another page.) Mr. Aitken said he was sorry that the Association had determined to carry on the work of agitation another year. What then, it was remarked, would you have us do? Mr. Aitken replied that they should carry on the work of God, and do all the good they could. He thought the Association had no cause of complaint: they should have sat down, and made themselves as useful as possible. He had himself suffered grievous wrong from many parts of the Connexion, but he did not on that account agitate, and now he had more doors opened than ever, and was he to put a barrier to his usefulness by agitating and disturbing the societies? One of the brethren replied, that it was very true Mr. Aitken had more doors opened to him, but for that he might thank the Association; it was not until the preachers found out that their purposes would be served by Mr. Aitken that they gave him any countenance and support. Mr. Aitken was reminded of Leeds, in which place the superintendent preacher had formerly thrown every obstacle in his way, but latterly, since the Association had sprung up, his way was made plain. Mr. Aitken went on to expatiate at great length on the evils of agitation, and denounced the late deputation to the Isle of Man, stating that previously they were all at peace, with the exception of a few discontented individuals, who were never particularly useful, and had no importance attached to them, until the deputation arrived in Castletown; he had, however, preached on the Sunday, and spoiled their sport, having obtained a pledge from the people that they would not agitate until after the Conference. Mr. Aitken then enlarged on the tremendous consequences resulting from injuring one child of God. A local preacher observed that there were thousands in Liverpool and Manchester who had been rudely thrust out

of society, and deprived of spiritual privileges, and, to do justice, Mr. Aitken ought to go to the authors of these enormities, and expose to them the awful responsibility under which they lay, and their duty in making all the reparation they could. Mr. Aitken was also asked whether any single instance could be cited in history of the clergy reforming abuses in the church until compelled by the people, and if all declensions in the piety and spirituality of religion, and every corruption of doctrine, had not originated with the clergy? To this Mr. Aitken made no reply. The obtaining of the concessions of 1795 and 1797 by agitation was also mentioned as an example warranting the people associating for the same purpose. Mr. Aitken replied, that we ought to sit down in peace under any ill usage, and not answer one word; we ought to act on the principle of doing all the good we could, and not resist whatever evils we suffered. Mr. Shirley asked if Mr. Aitken did not think, as a minister of the gospel, that it was well to have some settled principles of church government, and if it were not the duty of every Christian to oppose principles which he considered anti-Christian and unscriptural? Mr. Aitken said he would, under any circumstances, hold his peace. If he went into Ireland he would acknowledge himself a Roman Catholic, if he could thereby do any good to the souls of his fellow-creatures. He then proceeded to state what he considered required reform in the Methodist polity. He is for lay delegation on the broadest scale. In order to be scriptural, he would send two or seven laymen from each circuit to the district meeting, which laymen should have absolute control over the finances; the preachers to be deprived entirely of all interference with money transactions; the lay members of the district meetings to send two of their number to the Conference to manage the finances, whilst the preachers in another house transacted the spiritual business of the Connexion. He would make the test of a preacher's eligibility to remain a second or third year in a circuit consist in the degree of his usefulness, the number of souls he had been instrumental in converting, which should be ascertained at the quarterly meetings at the close of each year. He would deprive the preachers of their exclusive right of nomination to office, and vest it in the local meetings generally. He also stated it as his opinion, that any man who could raise a number of members out of the world sufficient to form a class, should be eligible to the office of leader. No preacher to be required to preach more than four times in the week, and three entire days of every week to be devoted by the preachers to visiting from house to house. Being asked whether he had any objection to his opinions being made public, he replied none whatever, provided they were fairly stated. He wished the Association to draw up a statement of their grievances and their plan of reform, and he would undertake, if permitted by the Conference, to lay it before them, and act between the parties as a mediator. *If he were the Conference, he would grant all the Association asked.* He said he would draw up his plan of reform and submit it to the Association.

The above is the substance of the conversation which took place at this memorable interview; the fairness and impartiality of the statements can be verified by above a dozen persons who were present.

However palatable to the preachers Mr. Aitken's ideas of passive obedience and non-resistance may be, we are afraid that the reverend

gentleman's plan of reform will be rather indigestible. If these are the concessions recommended by their friends, we should be inclined to give them the advice to "agree with thine adversary quickly whilst thou art in the way with him," lest their circumstances become speedily so desperate that the "uttermost farthing" will be rigorously exacted from them.

We had intended to offer a few remarks on some singular arguments lately put forth in support of the recent claims of the Methodist preachers to the "right divine to govern wrong," but we considered that the report of the above conference would be so interesting to our readers generally that we willingly postpone our remarks to the subsequent number.

Since writing the above, we understand that Mr. Aitken has advertised a pamphlet on the subject of mediation between the contending parties. If he can, indeed, succeed in bringing down the arrogant pretensions of the Conference to the level of Scripture and common sense, he will have executed a most arduous and unpromising task, and we will venture to say that he will experience no difficulty in inducing the Association to forego any claims he can prove inconsistent with reason and Scripture.

#### PROCEEDINGS AT TODMORDEN.

##### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

On Thursday, the 25th June, 1835, the quarterly meeting of the Todmorden Circuit (Halifax District) was held at Mytholmroyd. This circuit comprises a valley, the extremities of which are ten or twelve miles asunder. This *lengthy* peculiarity requires the preachers to reside apart, namely—one at the head of the circuit, another in the middle, and a third near the other end. For convenience, the same peculiarity led the people to have *three* circuit stewards, each residing in a different part from the rest; which *usage* has existed for a series of years. The officers at the head of the circuit being, however, at present in disfavour with the preachers, by reason of their advocacy of Conference Reform, were told by the superintendent at the last March and December quarterly meetings that the steward at the head of the circuit went out of office, by law, at the end of the year. They called upon him, therefore, to re-nominate the old steward, or otherwise, nominate another in his stead. They were answered decisively he *could not* re-nominate the old steward, but he nominated at the December quarterly meeting one, and also another, who were each rejected by the quarterly meeting; upon which the superintendent said "If you will not have whom I nominate, you must be without a circuit steward." He was urged, for the sake of peace, to nominate one whom the meeting would approve, or else distinctly state that the old steward remained in office. Accordingly, at the close of the December quarterly meeting, he announced "that the circuit steward, resident at Todmorden, remained in office till the March quarterly meeting," (as stated in No. 6 of your *Lantern*, February 11th, 1835.) This seemed to pacify the people. But at the March quarter day (the reform officers not being numerous in attendance) nothing further was formally done in this matter; and, consequently, doubt and dispute have arisen as to whether there was any steward at the head of the circuit: this, therefore, was the first subject introduced to the June meeting, over which the chairman of the district, Mr. Galland, presided, by the desire of the superintendent, Mr. Roberts. The worthy chairman suggested that the regular routine business of the day had better be gone through, and then the discussion of the subject resumed. It was agreed to.

After the bills were paid, there were a few pounds over, which, added to the former balance in the steward's hands, made a surplus of about £70. The trustees of the Todmorden Chapel then stated that they should make a claim for the rent of the preacher's house, hitherto let *gratis* to the circuit. It was objected, that if this claim were allowed, it would be *diverting* the circuit money from its



usual channel, that the rent of the other preachers' houses in the circuit would also be undoubtedly claimed, and then there could not be a fourth travelling preacher called into the circuit, to support whom this surplus money *ought* to be applied, and would be *more Methodistically* applied. It was more than insinuated by the preachers' party that the *sole* motive of the Todmorden trustees in claiming a rent was to prevent a fourth preacher coming. In reply, this ungenerous insinuation was protested against, and the reason for the claim being now made was the present ability of the circuit to pay it; whereas in former years the circuit was embarrassed, and, therefore, the claim was waived, the trustees being unwilling to bring this circuit, for the first time, to the humiliating necessity of demanding it from the district meeting. Mr. Hannah, when at Huddersfield, and Chairman of the Halifax District, had been consulted on the point, and had said it was perfectly Methodistical, and we ought by all means to have a rent. The trustees who found houses for the other preachers had not done so for as many years as the Todmorden trustees had, and also had a larger income, compared with their expenditure, and might, with some reason, be called upon to remit *their* claim. But the Todmorden trustees were differently circumstanced. In former years, they had not only *given* a house (when the other trustees did not) rent free to the circuit, but also when the circuit required help, they had advanced from their own funds to the quarter board, at various times, upwards of £200. But having since then erected a new and larger chapel, and a good house, furnished at their own expense, their case was altered. In fact, a reverse had taken place between the circuit and them. Was it, then, just or equitable—was it kind or grateful—was it reasonable or Methodistical to object to such a claim under such circumstances? As to the other trustees, let *them* serve the circuit *gratis* as long as the Todmorden trustees have done, and *then* their demand will be more equitable. But the Todmorden trustees *needed* all possible help, and the circuit was obliged no little to them, and being *now* in a condition to pay it, they should persist in their demand. The subject of a fourth preacher coming was entirely distinct from this; and when entered upon, would be discussed in itself, and upon its own bottom and merits. But we were first to “do justly,” and then to “love mercy.” The chairman stated “that it was quite Methodistical for the rent of preachers' houses to be paid. After proper notice it would be for the quarterly meeting to consider whether they should pay the rent demanded by the Todmorden trustees, or take another house, which they were at liberty to do; and the trustees were also at liberty to let their house to others, if the circuit refused to give the rent.” A written notice was then put in by order of a meeting of the Todmorden trustees that rent would be claimed quarterly, reckoning from this date. This was followed by similar notices from *individual* trustees of the other houses, apparently in a purely factious spirit.

The next topic was, whether a fourth preacher should come into the circuit. In favour of it, it was said that the last quarterly meeting had a majority for it; that the new chapels could not be sufficiently supplied without; that preaching was only one part of the minister's duty; and that pastoral visits could not be adequately made without additional itinerant help. That by pushing on the work, with a fourth active preacher, we should keep in easy circumstances; and if not, we ought to be willing for the sake of the cause to run the risk of embarrassment. But there was a packed meeting, who had orders from head quarters, from the Association at Todmorden, to carry a point; and the last quarterly meeting did convey the sense of the circuit more than any vote of this meeting could do. It was also insinuated that the ulterior object was to do without travelling preachers altogether.

In reply it was observed that the majority of last quarterly meeting was small, and the vote obtained late, when many had gone home; that the new chapels might have a portion of the labours of the present three travelling preachers by the trustees of the old ones giving up a part of their sermons, and that the Todmorden trustees had authorized the statement that they were willing, in order to accommodate other places, to give up what sermons the superintendent might think fair and reasonable; that however desirable it might appear to have a fourth preacher, the fact was, that when a third preacher was called in, the experiment had been tried in this circuit for many years during its embarrassment, and extra beggings were so frequent in the classes, that the minds of the people were exceedingly hurt, and ready to think that their money was more cared for than their souls; and when the officers assembled in their various meetings in those long and

unhappy years, there was so much censure for coming short of money,—so much bickering, recrimination, and consequent bad feeling, that the quarter-day approached them with a fearful aspect; they attended it with reluctance; they remained in it without pleasure; and left it with a load of sorrow that so much trouble and distress should arise in the very bosom of the church. What prosperity was there in all this? And if we look at the thing externally, we shall find as little. Our numbers did not increase, although we had more preaching than we could pay for, without getting into debt. And is this a state of things that we long to go back to? No; for what *followed* the last effort to get the circuit out of debt? When there was no complaining about the want of money, and the innumerable unpleasantnesses connected with it had subsided, the Lord poured out his spirit, little revivals occurred in different parts of the circuit, and our finances have since then kept in a healthy condition. Why should we wish a change for the worse—a state of inevitable debt, along with a fourth preacher? Besides, under existing circumstances, who can assure us that our numbers will not be greatly diminished, instead of increased? Who is not aware of the widely spread and deeply rooted dissatisfaction existing in the Connexion? Look at the best men among the preachers—men of piety, men of commanding talent, men of renown, with *declining* congregations. And is this the time, when many either altogether, or partially, desert our chapels, even where the most popular preachers are officiating,—is this the time to call into the circuit a fourth preacher? No. Could we, nevertheless, be assured that our numbers would not lessen, we should not so strongly object to a fourth preacher, for, although slandered, we are friends of Methodism, and of the itinerant plan; and the time is not far distant when more charity will be exercised in thinking and speaking of the Todmorden friends. Something had been said of head quarters, the Association orders, &c. of the existence of which no evidence was before the meeting, and, therefore, weighed nothing with the speaker. As to the packed meeting, the question was, Had the persons present a *right* to be there? Were they *accredited* members of the meeting? If so, they were unobjectionable. The manner in which they had come concerned only themselves individually, and was nothing to any one else. If it were supposed that any were the dupes of some “rascal,” and ignorantly misled, being now here present, there was an opportunity of trying to convince them of their error, and drilling them into a better mind. Here the chairman animadverted upon the Association as Methodistically illegal; and quoted the rule of 1796 against calling meetings, circulating letters, &c. &c. and read the remarks alluding to it contained in the preachers’ circular of 1797, and concluded that the law was in force. To this it was replied, that at the close of the said circular we were informed that, for brevity’s sake, they had given the general heads of their proceedings, but say they, “In the regulations which will be published with the rules of the society, you will have the whole at large.” Now this “whole at large” must mean “all,” if it mean any thing; but on referring to this “whole at large” in the end of the class books, the rule of 1796 was *not to be found*; and the inference was, that it was obsolete and *not* in force. But, supposing it to be in force, it is for its tyranny a disgrace to the Methodist statute book, and more “honoured in the breach than in the observance.” Are we, whatever cause of grievance may arise, even from the preachers’ themselves, to be gagged and not suffered to speak on the subject; to be bound hand and foot, and not allowed to meet to devise means of obtaining redress? What slavery can surpass *this*? No! such a law ought not to exist amongst a free people; such a law, if it do exist, cannot, in this age, be enforced.

The resolution of last quarterly meeting to call in a fourth preacher was then rescinded by a large majority.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

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“The person whose moral nature is not injured by the possession of absolute power must be even more elevated above his fellow-creatures in wisdom and virtue than in authority.”—*Dr. Southey.*

“It is observed by a living prelate of America, that ‘where implicit faith is required, the subject of it must be supposed infallible; and as man cannot arrogate to himself this attribute, there are means appointed to correct his judgment; and among these there is nothing more availing than free discussion. Hence the use of councils; and none, from the days of the apostles to the present, who have forbidden free debate, have ever prospered.’”—*Observations on Wesleyan Methodism, by Mark Robinson.*

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH NECESSARY IN A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

"Add to godliness, brotherly kindness."

SIR,—“Well may Turks and Pagans fall out and fight when Christians can't agree,” was a trite remark I recollect being uttered by a near neighbour of mine some fifteen years ago, who was solicited to act as a mediator or peace-maker in a section of a religious community whose members, at that time, had forgotten to “be kindly affectioned one to another.”

The sentiment in the above observation has frequently, of late, recurred to my mind, when I have been eye and ear witness of the bickering, backbiting, and evil speaking among those whom I always believed to be as oracles, ornaments, and pillars in the church of Christ. “Genuine piety is *social*; and this social piety is not affection to a party, but universal love.” The love of God is a paramount affection, that forcibly carries in its train other inclinations, and leads captive a host of petty wishes and ephemeral desires. This is the meaning of that axiom, “Ye must, to enter the kingdom of heaven, become as little children.” Simplicity of spirit, singleness of intention, harmony and unison of all emotions, is the law of the heavenly world, and must belong, in measure, to all who claim part therein. There can be allowed no anarchy of the passions in the bosom that is to lodge the Divine Spirit; and it is always true, that when omnipotent grace takes possession of a human heart, it expels, on its very entrance, the legion of lawless desire.

Sir, your publication laudably professes “to throw light on the proceedings of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference and its representatives.” As an organized body, consisting of the reciprocal action of pastors and people, the Methodist body has unquestionably produced a great moral and religious good, having had champions in piety, talent, and learning, inferior to none of the present race and generation. They laid the *foundation*,—the present is only the *superstructure*. Mental and physical obstacles, bigotry, superstition, ignorance, and poverty were successfully encountered by the *veterans* of Methodism,—a condition for which the *moderns* are not prepared or required to imitate, in consequence of the absence of necessity and ability. A good cause cannot be composed of *evil* agents or instruments. “A good tree is known by its fruit.”

The source of the late dissensions, or rather unmerited expulsions, cannot fail of being to every heart that is rightly disposed one of sympathetic sorrow and grief, and in the end produce a mutual and an earnest desire to remove the obstacles and repair the breach. Prayer and supplication will incessantly be made at the footstool of Divine mercy. The Christian's public deportment will harmonize with the feelings of a quiet, meek, and inoffensive spirit; his conscience will be “tender as the apple of an eye;” his words and actions will “add to godliness, brotherly kindness,” and “to brotherly kindness, charity.” The will of Christ is, that his followers, notwithstanding many diversities of opinion, should remain in love and communion. Whoever, then, on pretence of obedience to Christ, breaks up this communion, assumes to himself a direct commission from Heaven to that effect. The prohibition of church divisions is as explicit and intelligible as the prohibition of murder. Those numerous passages of scripture, which at once enjoin mutual forbearance, and forbid division on any points *not manifestly essential to Christian belief*, are so thoroughly perspicuous, that, being confessedly of Divine authority, they must demand nothing less than an equally clear announcement from the same source to abrogate or hold them in abeyance. Whoever, therefore, treats them as a nullity, virtually pretends to an unquestionable conveyance of the Divine will to himself in that particular. We must recollect that there is a probability, perhaps a high probability, that the man who has been termed a dogmatist or agitator, and spoken of with reprobation, is one whom the Lord has taught, and sent forth to inveigh against prevailing corruptions. Was not Wickliffe such? Were not Huss and Luther such? And, during our day, has not Wesley been such? And Kilham and the Bournes, what are they? And “Warren” and his associates, what do they appear to be? It is quite plain that an adherence on his (Dr. Warren's) part to the modest course of plainly declaring his opinion, and quietly setting forth the reasons of it, and entreating the attention of his brethren, promises to be productive of much good. The spirit that has no modesty manifestly has no sense of abstract excellence, and

therefore can have no greatness, or, at least, is not holding converse with things greater than itself. If, indeed, the general body will not tolerate any such expression of private opinion,—if it attempts to impose silence upon him, to crush him; if, in the true spirit of obdurate folly, it will “hear no reproofs,” and casts forth “the troublesome member;” then the whole blame of division rests with the body, not with the dissident individual. The church is the schismatic when it has no ear and no indulgence for diversities of sentiment. There is manifestly something which requires to be balanced or adjusted and kept in equipoise between the principle of faith and the principle of action. The one has a tendency to exclude the other, or to overpower it. But Christian excellence consists in the preservation of this balance; and the preservation of it, we must add, greatly depends upon the circumstances of the times.

A candid review of the entire course of church history must convince any one that very high degrees of personal piety and virtue, piety and virtue even of the most exalted order, often consist with a participation in egregious errors, of that sort which attach more to a body or community at large than to individuals. This truth has been lost sight of in every age, and in our own times. For example, while we know by personal consciousness, and by happy fellowship with others, that Christianity exists among us in much vigour and purity, and is bringing forth its fruit in all quarters of the land, many repel indignantly the supposition that *the entire Christian body* may be capitally in fault; and yet were not the Jansenists and the men of Port Royal Christians? Were not Pascal and Fenelon men of God? Well were it if we could now match them in elevation, devotion, and spirituality.

A due understanding of the exact coincidence of the several circles of the Divine agency is of no small importance; and to a misunderstanding of it we may trace many of the errors and perplexities that infest the region of religious sentiment. Now, in times of action and of peril, the daily experience of the Christian effectively teaches him that the Divine Providence, and the spiritual economy, which are the objects of his faith, do not in any wise interfere with the ordinary or physical course of events. With this evidence of experience constantly pressed upon him, his faith ascends into its proper sphere; while he confidently reposes upon the Divine declaration, “That all things shall work together for good to those who love God.”

It is not improbable that events in the universe of mind are moving on—that fortunes are rising and falling—that destinies are bursting forth, blossoming and bearing fruit; which, when known, shall make the material framework of nature to appear (great as it is) nothing more than a stage for their accomplishment and display! Instead, therefore, of cherishing a blind attachment to phrases, modes, usages, and opinions, which are separable from the substance of religion, wise and docile spirits, though they may not hope fully to anticipate, in imagination, the changes that are to be effected, will, at least, preserve with care a state of feeling such as shall prove the best preparation for joining in with whatever may attend the expected “times of refreshment.”

Never let it be forgotten, that it is for the workings of the mind, as well as for the actions of the life; that it is for the character of our creed, as well as for the tenor of our practice,—that we are personally responsible; and that all erroneous notions, as well as vicious deeds, are comprised in this one fearful testimony, “So, then, every one of us must give account of himself to God.”

High Peak, Derby, May 29, 1835.

REFLECTOR.

“The corruptions which were early introduced into the Christian church were exposed by the apostles before even its natural enemies—the Jews and Heathens; and the Reformers proceeded on the same principle,—so did Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Bramwell. The evil they sought to remove—the good to preserve.”—*Observations on Wesleyan Methodism, by Mark Robinson.*

“The late excellent Dr. Coke observed, in a letter to a friend from Antrim, Ireland, dated 29th April, 1795:—‘Hitherto we have seen, since the death of Mr. Wesley, the most perfect aristocracy existing perhaps upon earth. The people have no power,—we the WHOLE in the fullest sense which can be conceived. If there be any change in favour of religious liberty, the people certainly should have some power.’”—*Observations on Wesleyan Methodism, by Mark Robinson.*



## THE ALLEGED DIVINE RIGHT OF METHODIST PREACHERS EXAMINED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Being a constant reader of the *Watchman's Lantern*, I was induced, by your animadversion on different articles in the *Illuminator*, to purchase a number of that publication, to judge for myself, namely, the 13th. I had not read far before I was convinced that it was most admirably calculated for the meridian of Madrid or Lisbon; but as I proceeded I could not help surmising that the writer must be some Jesuit in disguise, who, knowing how readily our people receive as truth whatever our preachers assert is Methodism, was thus endeavouring to lead them back to old mother Church, and the fable of uninterrupted apostolic succession; and I was the more inclined to this opinion as the writer evidently reserves to ministers the right to forgive sins, as he mentions it as a part of the ministerial duties.—page 195. "To preach the gospel; to disciple all nations, to baptize, &c.; and to retain or remit sins." Now, whatever validity may be in the writer's arguments, how will it avail our preachers in assuming it as an inherent right to do wrong, by expelling our most pious and useful members, without the concurrence of a leaders' meeting?—for the writer of the article referred to will, in a future number, undoubtedly show that he is contending for the right of the clergy, and that Methodist preachers are not clergymen but laymen, raised by the votes of laymen to the livings of rectors, and to be teachers and preachers of the gospel; and he will undoubtedly further show, that Mr. Wesley never considered them as clergy but lay preachers, whom he might any day send back to their shops, their looms, or their ploughs, from which they were taken; and further, that their own Conference had renounced all claim to the title of clergy, by forbidding any preacher to receive or give the title of reverend. Being thus stripped of their borrowed plumes and lion's skin, I ask, how will they support their pretended right to expel members and to trample on the rights of our societies? Not from the exercise of the pastoral office, as that more properly belongs to our leaders, as there are but few Methodist families (except such as can keep a plentiful table) can remember a visit from them: and they hardly will allow that they derive this power from the quarterly meeting, whose vote sent them into the itinerancy, as then they must allow that those who gave can take away. If they say they received it with their call to the ministry, then they received it as local preachers. It then follows that all the local preachers have this inherent power, and have an equal right to expel the stipendiary preachers as the preachers them, and the law of retaliation will justify them in using it; therefore the writer of this is induced to exercise it on the 830 preachers who signed the memorable declaration against the people's rights, and does hereby expel the whole of them, and declare them no longer members of the Methodist society; and our societies being thus happily free from those who spoiled them, it is to be hoped that they will lose no time in proceeding to elect in their stead faithful shepherds, who will not lord it over God's heritage.

But to return to the *Illuminator*. Is the writer serious in his inquiry, page 196, "whether the apostles, in forming Christian churches, committed its discipline into the hands of religious societies?" &c. Why, then, does he pass to the 14th chapter of Acts, over the first transactions of the Christian Church recorded in the 1st chapter, where we read thus:—"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about one hundred and twenty?)" This included "the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus," the eleven apostles, and part of the seventy disciples who resided in Jerusalem; but these could not be many, as the greatest part of our Lord's disciples were of Galilee; the remainder, to make up the number, were the laity, who were associated with the apostles in the important act of electing an apostle, two being nominated. After prayer "they gave forth the lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." Dr. Clarke's opinion is "that it is possible that the whole was decided by what we commonly call by ballot, God inclining the hearts of the majority to ballot for Matthias." In the 14th chapter we have an account of Paul and Barnabas ordaining elders in every church, &c. Dr. Clarke, on this verse, says, that the Greek word here translated ordained, is *Cheirotonia*, "and signifies the holding up or stretching out the hand." And he adds, "I believe the simple truth to be this, that in ancient times the people chose by the *Cheirotonia*, (lifting up of hands,) their spiritual pastor, and the rulers of the church appointed that person to his office by the imposition of hands." In the 15th chapter, the whole church is so evidently set forth as acting in connexion

with the apostles, that I think it needless to notice the gloss of the *Illuminator* on the chapter, and shall only give a short note from Mr. Wesley to satisfy your readers that it is a Methodistic view of the text. In his note on the 22d verse, he says, "With the whole church, which therefore had a part therein, to *send chosen men*, who might put it beyond dispute that this was the judgment of the apostles *and all the church*." To which I add Mr. Benson's reflections on the 2d, 3d, and 4th verses of the 6th chapter. "It would have been happy for the church had its ordinary ministers, in every age, taken the same care to act in concert with the people committed to their charge, which the apostles themselves did on this and other occasions." Thus we see the practice of the apostles and the Primitive Church, and the opinion of three of the greatest authorities in Methodism, is, that the voice of the people ought to be brought to bear upon all the transactions of the church. Leaving, then, the *Illuminator* to the sinister course he has taken in perverting the word of God, I conclude by observing with Mr. Benson, "Happy for the church,—yea, thrice happy for the Methodist Church, had its ordinary ministers taken the same care to act in concert with the people committed to their charge, which the apostles themselves did on this and other occasions."

#### AN OLD LOCAL PREACHER.

### THE PRESENT STATE OF METHODISM IN CARLISLE.

In the present struggle between the Wesleyan Methodist preachers and the societies, every incident which occurs becomes interesting, tending still more clearly to mark and point out the precise nature as well as the character of the present wide spreading agitation. Fain would the preachers persuade the people that agitation is ceasing; fain would they sing the song of peace, and lull their unconscious hearers into apathy and indifference: but however calm the surface may appear in various places, still it is but the calm that precedes the more extended and violent spread of the tempest. All eyes are turned towards the approaching Conference, and that meeting will either be the means of calming the agitation now existing, and of restoring peace to the suffering societies, or still more extensively will its high tone of defiance arouse the spirit of resistance, and hasten on the downfall of priestly despotism and irresponsible power. The people have borne much, very much, from their preachers; but the time has arrived when they will bear no more, and they will prove to all the world that, lovers as they have ever proved themselves to be of peace, yet peace itself may be bought too dear. Let us take Carlisle for an instance. When the Rev. T. Dunn came into the circuit all was peace, prosperity, and affection; he was received as an angel of light; his ministry well attended; the chapel filled with attentive hearers, and every prospect of much good being done. Now let us observe the close of his ministry in Carlisle, which took place on Saturday, the 5th instant. About one hundred and fifty hearers were present, instead of at least one thousand, which ought to be the number of the regular congregation: and still more to prove to him the decided change in popular feeling, a local preacher occupied on the same day the pulpit of the Tabernacle, and preached both morning and evening to large and attentive congregations.\* The public mind revolts at the idea of any man, who, like Mr. Dunn, by his *mere word*, contrary alike to Scripture, reason, and Methodism, can and will expel from a Christian society the most valuable and efficient members of the church, and, regardless of their immortal souls, their peace of mind, their respectability of character, cast them forth into the world, and leave them to be gathered up by Satan, if he pleases to take them. But the decided and determined steps which the Carlisle society has taken, clearly prove that however others may submit to priestly tyranny, its members will not submit; hence, having left Mr. Dunn to himself, and withdrawn from his *stepfather-like* paternal care, they have regularly organized the circuit, supplied the different places with preaching, erected a most commodious and decent-looking wooden building, calling it their "Tabernacle," which they have engaged for eighteen months, and which place was opened on the 28th of June, by Dr. Warren, when he delivered two admirable discourses to crowded audiences, numbers being unable to gain admittance; and on the Monday evening following he delivered an excellent lecture, detailing the aggressions of the Conference. He produced a great effect; and many have got their eyes opened, not easily to be again closed. The subscriptions and collec-

\* When Mr. Dunn delivered his farewell sermon on the Monday evening following, only forty hearers were present.

tions amounted to about £40. But this state of affairs most materially affects the interest of the trustees of Fisher-street Chapel, a *deserted* chapel; and unlet pews form no very pleasing prospect for the trustees to contemplate, men who are bound for a large amount of interest, but who have come forward nobly to the help of the people, determined (with the exception of two) to stand or fall with them. The people, through their official character, have pledged themselves to make up whatever deficiency may occur in the rental of the chapel, thus practically proving their high sense of the noble firmness manifested by the trustees, and that while the trustees depend upon the people, and not upon the preachers, they have nothing to fear; for at the quarterly meeting, on the 29th of June, a vote was unanimously passed to support the trustees. May the trustees generally learn wisdom, and imitate the conduct of these of Carlisle!

Now where is that "blessed re-action," that "restored peace," which Mr. Dunn, in his address to the societies, so unblushingly affirmed had taken place? Alas! for him, it exists nowhere but in his printed address. Surely some men must be regardless whether they publish truth or falsehood! Since the agitation commenced in Carlisle, the superintendent has held several hole-and-corner meetings in different parts of the circuit, to which he invited a few of his particular friends, and to which he refused admitting the circuit stewards. He called them *irregular* circuit meetings, (something "new in Methodism,") yet at these very meetings he transacted circuit business, paid and received money, proposed a certain local preacher as a travelling preacher, and, of course, got him passed, and will, doubtless, recommend him to Conference, as having passed the quarterly meeting of the circuit, whereas, in fact, he never was mentioned at a quarterly meeting, at all. So much for Mr. Dunn's walking by rule; that is, he can enforce, ay, and strain the rule to the utmost, when he can gain a point by so doing, and break it most flagrantly when it suits his purpose. It was rather amusing to find Mr. Dunn and his party holding their quarterly meeting in the chapel on the 29th of June, and at the same hour the Association also holding their quarterly meeting in the school-room below the chapel. To make up the serious deficiency in money, arising from two-thirds of the societies throughout the circuit having joined the Association, a certain lady sent £20 to the quarterly meeting, to help in their time of need. However praiseworthy her liberality may be, it too clearly proves the nature of the present conflict, and that unholy alliance which the preachers have made with the rich few, to oppress and domineer over the many. Such things cannot last, for a few quarter days will speedily dry up the *forced* stream of bounty.—When Methodism must depend upon the rich for support, its genuine character and glory are lost.

One feature of the present agitation is remarkable. The people will not divide. No, though urged to it by the opposite party, though taunted with it continually, yet they are determined not to leave and form a separate society. They seek the redress of grievances, a more liberal form of church government, and look steadily forward to a re-union with their opponents, when all dissensions shall be lost in the harmony of the body at large. Hence every step which the people have taken is of a temporary nature: a temporary chapel, supplied by local preachers; no fixed and regular minister. These things clearly prove that dissension and division, however much their opponents may charge them with it, is not the end which they have in view, but a redress of wrongs. It is also worthy of notice, that the Carlisle society had formed no regular plan; every step which they have taken has been forced upon them by circumstances. It was their intention to abide by the chapel, still to attend upon Mr. Dunn's ministry, and still to support him; but when again and again their minds were wounded in seeing the pulpit made the vehicle of abuse, it was then they cried out for separate preaching, and to this demand the local preachers and leaders gave a reluctant consent; but in so doing they followed the call of Providence, the path of duty, and have thus been enabled, through the blessing of the Almighty, to keep their flock collected together. Oh, it was a gratifying sight, last Sabbath morning, to see the people assembled in their "wooden Tabernacle," unitedly worshipping their Maker, sitting under the ministry of a local preacher, and feeling the word to be spirit and life to their souls, for truly the Lord was present in the midst of his people.

Another remarkable circumstance is, that after having driven the members out of society, bidding them to leave, saying they could do better without them, yet Mr. Dunn's party cry out, "You are starving *your* preachers; you are stopping the supplies; what consummate cruelty to the preachers and their families!" But what consummate inconsistency; tell, desire, and force a people to leave, and

then blame them for withholding their contribution ! It seems, however, much as they dislike the persons, they yet wish for their cash.

The preachers are very inconsistent in their application of Methodist law ; for instance, last Christmas Mr. Dunn refused to meet the classes for tickets, unless the leaders would promise to "break off with the Manchester Association, cease corresponding with the neighbouring circuits, and no longer oppose the Conference ;" but after wearying the leaders, and keeping them repeatedly till midnight in their meetings, finding the leaders (with the exception of two) firm to their purpose, he suddenly, to their great surprise, meets the classes for tickets, and says not a syllable about his former proposition, but most *carefully* avoids the subjects he had either no right to enforce with tests of membership, or, if right, he was guilty of a dereliction of duty in afterwards losing sight of. Again, when he expelled Mr. Cox, the leaders repeatedly begged him to *reconsider* the case, and annul what he had so rashly done. But no, he said "he had no power to do so ; he could not reverse it ;" yet, strange to tell, ere three months are passed over, this very Mr. Dunn comes forward, seeks a reconciliation with the leaders, and, as the basis of reconciliation, spontaneously offers to reinstate Mr. Cox in all his offices, as member, local preacher, and leader. Now Mr. Dunn either expelled that person justly or unjustly ; if justly, how could he, in violation of those very rules by which he said he was determined to walk, offer to reinstate Mr. Cox, and yet overlook his being a member of the Association, for Mr. Cox made no compromise, still maintaining the same decided prominent part which he did previous to his expulsion ? if unjustly, then where is that regard for character which every preacher ought to maintain ? These facts speak powerfully, and make it evident that the preachers are driven to every subterfuge, in order to intimidate and carry on their usurpation in the Church ; but such crooked policy must in the end fail ; even they, and their warmest adherents will, ere long, see and feel the necessity of a thorough reform in Wesleyan Methodism. Oh may the Divine Being hasten the desirable time !

Carlisle, July 7, 1835.

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#### WESLEYAN-METHODIST ASSOCIATION.

At a MEETING of the UNITED COMMITTEE of LIVERPOOL and MANCHESTER, held at Newton, on Monday, the 29th of June, it was unanimously resolved,—

"That this Committee, deeply impressed with the magnitude and importance of the objects they seek to attain, and contemplating the possibility of the ensuing Conference refusing to concede the just rights of the people, determine, in the fear of God, in such an event, to maintain, by every legal means, the present position of the United Association, and to persevere in calling upon the Methodist people to aid in demanding from the Conference of 1836 the concessions which they deem essential to the prosperity, and even the existence, of Methodism."

Resolved unanimously, "That it be earnestly recommended to the Branch Associations, and to the Societies at large, to set apart Wednesday, the 29th of July, as a day of fasting and humiliation, and earnest prayer to Almighty God for his direction and blessing on the measures which may be determined on by the delegates and Conference at Sheffield."

It was resolved unanimously, "That the above resolutions be inserted in the *Christian Advocate* newspaper, and the *Watchman's Lantern*."

(Signed)

WILLIAM SMITH, Chairman,  
WILLIAM WOOD, Secretary.

N. B.—The delegates will please to take notice that it will be necessary for them to be in Sheffield on Thursday, the 30th instant, so as to be prepared for business on the following day. Further information respecting the arrangements for the occasion will be furnished to them on application at the vestry of Surrey-street Chapel, adjoining the Music Hall.

We would most earnestly entreat all those Methodists who desire a scriptural reform in the Methodist polity,—who desire to see the preachers "ministers of good tidings" and not tyrants, and the people contented and happy, to send their delegates to the approaching meeting at Sheffield.



## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—Leeds-street Chapel is all but deserted, in consequence of the absurd and reckless conduct of the preachers and their supporters, in driving away the former congregation. The half-yearly rent day for letting the pews being close at hand, every possible effort has been made to remedy the "beggarly account of empty benches" which presents itself weekly to the vision of the preachers on the Sabbath, particularly when that "*eminent divine*," the Rev. Samuel Jackson, officiates. Amongst other devices the following handbill has been very extensively circulated in the neighbourhood :—

"Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary."

"A sincere desire for the better observance of this Divine command amongst the inhabitants in this neighbourhood leads us to inform you that the Methodist Chapel, in Leeds-street, is open for the public worship of Almighty God, every Lord's Day, at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, three in the afternoon, and six in the evening. And your attendance is very earnestly requested."

Leeds-street Chapel has been opened for divine service *thirty-six years*, and it now seems, it is necessary, after such a lapse of time, "to inform the *neighbourhood*" that such a place of worship is in existence!!! We put it to every man who has room in his brain for a second idea, whether the bitterest enemies of the Methodist preachers could have published a more severe or cutting libel on their neglect of duty. A Methodist chapel has been opened in a densely-peopled part of the town for thirty-six years, with *resident ministers* the whole time, and it is actually found necessary to "inform the neighbourhood" that there is such a place. Comment is quite unnecessary. Under these circumstances we may be permitted to doubt whether some other motives, as well as the alleged "sincere desire for the better observance" of the Lord's day, have not been instrumental in producing so novel a step as this, which, whatever they may say, is something "new in Methodism,"—at least in Liverpool.

The love-feast usually held in the chapel was this quarter held in the school-room behind, under the apprehension that certain ruthless members of the Association could legally demand admission, possessing the freehold of several pews in the chapel.

*Shrewsbury.*—At the quarterly meeting of the Shrewsbury circuit, held on the 25th March last, the following reso-

lutions were agreed to by all the members present with the exception of five :—

"1. That no official person shall be expelled from office, without the consent of the meeting of which he is a member; and that no member shall be expelled the society without the consent of the majority of the leaders' meeting. To obviate any objection to this, an appeal might lie from the local preachers and leaders' meetings to the circuit quarterly meeting, which shall be legally composed of travelling and local preachers, stewards, and leaders, and also trustees, being members of the Methodist society: the decision of that meeting to be final.

"2. That our official meetings shall have the unfettered right of addressing the Conference on any subject which they may think affects their interest. That no superintendent, *ex-officio*, shall be allowed to prohibit an official meeting from passing resolutions expressive of its sentiments, for the purpose of conveying such sentiments to the Conference. And that, if any superintendent should refuse to put to the vote any resolutions regularly proposed for the before-mentioned purpose, then the meeting shall have authority to appoint another person to be for that time the chairman of the meeting.

"3. That, before the Conference pass any new rule or regulation affecting the societies, the opinions of the people, through the quarterly meetings in the preceding year, shall be taken thereon: and, unless a majority of the members, as represented by such meetings, agree to such proposed rule or regulation, it shall not become the law of the Connexion.

"4. That, when any accusation is made against a travelling preacher which requires to be investigated before the meeting of Conference, in all such cases, the accusation shall be referred to a meeting of the preachers in the district, the local preachers, trustees, leaders, and stewards of the circuit in which the accused preacher is stationed: the majority of such meeting to determine thereon, according to the rule of 1794 and 1795."

To the honour of the circuit preachers, Messrs. Allen and Irving, it should be stated that no attempt was made on their parts to put down discussion by any violent or unfair means; the meeting was in consequence spared one of those unhallowed exhibitions of angry feeling and contemptuous disregard of the opinions of the members which have so often taken place on these occasions. It was ordered that the resolutions should be sent up for insertion in the *Watchman* and the *Methodist Magazine*, but the editors of those publications, with a sort of Hibernian impartiality,

never giving insertion to any thing at all opposed to their own faction, the resolutions were last week inserted in the *Christian Advocate*.

*Good Advice well followed.*—The following anecdote will be interesting to our readers:—

"Mr. P., a worthy member of the Methodist Society in Bow, was engaged in a little friendly conversation with Mr. C. one of the travelling preachers in the circuit. The topic was the all-absorbing one, Dr. Warren and his movements. In the course of the converse, Mr. C. rather ironically observed to Mr. P., speaking of the Doctor, "Ah, poor fellow! Why don't you make him a present of a five-pound note, to help to pay his Chancery expenses?" "So I will!" was the instantaneous reply of Mr. P. "I had not made up my mind what to give," continued he, "but I'll do as you bid me, and give him five pounds."

A very short time after this happened, business obliged Mr. P. to go to Manchester, when and where he placed the five pounds in the hands of Dr. Warren. —*Christian Advocate*.

*Carlisle.*—In our last number we stated that the Tabernacle had been opened on the 28th June by the Rev. Dr. Warren. On the Monday evening he delivered a lecture on the present agitated state of the societies, and truly a most pitiable picture he drew of the wrongs and aggressions practised by those who ought to have been the helpers and guardians of the flock. The collections, with a previous subscription, amounted to the handsome sum of about £40. So much for that "blessed re-action" which the preachers would fain have the world believe was taking place. The love-feast in the Tabernacle on Sunday afternoon was attended by between 600 and 700 people; while Mr. Manwaring, in the Fisher-street chapel, mustered about 100: and only about seven could be excited to speak. Oh! how has the glory departed! Our readers will doubtless recollect that some time since a public meeting of the Association was held in the Methodist chapel, by the desire and with the consent of the trustees. They were threatened with law proceedings subsequently, but not a single step has been taken up to the present time to punish such high disregard to Conferential authority. But what have the people done? Why, they are determined to stand by their trustees; for, of course, a deserted chapel and *unlet* pews must make a serious item of defalcation in the receipts of the chapel; hence, to cover their loss, and

to testify their high sense of the obligation the people are under to these noble-minded trustees, the official members assembled last Monday, June 29, in their quarterly meeting, pledged themselves and passed a vote to that effect, that they will advance to the trustees whatever *moneys* they may require, to pay the interest of the debt due on the premises. Hear it! ye trustees throughout the land, and let it remind you that by taking part with, and not against the people, you are more safe than by supporting an *unholy despotism*. Let your forsaken chapels, your diminished, and still diminishing resources, prove to you that the people, and not the preachers, are your firmest support. By your joining the people, you will be the means of compelling the Conference to a speedy adjustment of existing claims.

*Halifax.*—At the quarterly meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist local preachers in the Halifax circuit, which was held on Monday last, the Rev. T. Galland, A. M., superintendent, in the chair, it was proposed to consider the charge brought against Mr. G. Browne, in the *Halifax Guardian*, with reference to remarks alleged to have been made in his sermons; but it was decided that no observations made by any party not a member of the meeting could be received. The usual process, however, of investigation into the character and conduct of each preacher, was rigorously observed in relation to Mr. Browne, when there was found no cause of complaint against him on any point, nor was any charge whatever brought against him.—*Halifax Express*.

*Sunderland.*—The erection of a new chapel has not long since been commenced in this town, into which the trustees (a few rich men) have determined to introduce an organ, *in spite (as they have openly avowed)* of the opposition of the quarterly meeting and the great mass of the society. Its introduction was condemned by a very large majority of the March quarter-day. They have, of course, been supported in their purpose by the District Meeting, and are very confident of obtaining the sanction of Conference; who, at this season, are very cautious of offending the wealthy part of their societies. The subject was again agitated at the quarter-day, and it was proposed that the meeting recommended the Conference to withhold their consent, when, after a two-hours' discussion, the superintendent preacher had the effrontery to tell us that he could not put it from the chair; though unable to assign any rea-

son, or to show any rule to forbid it: the consequence is, Conference will be addressed without the leave of the preacher.

—*Christian Advocate.*

**Barnard Castle.**—An interesting Wesleyan reform meeting was held on the 28th June, in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Sheldon, in this circuit. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Lightfoot, chairman; G. and H. Spencer, from Darlington; Rev. R. Emmett, of Yarm; and Messrs. Mankin and Wilson, of Sheldon. With the exception of very few indeed, all the members of the society seem on the liberal side of the question.—*Christian Advocate.*

**Manchester.**—What is the actual condition of Methodism here at present? In Oldham-street chapel, which in days of real prosperity was always crowded, there are many pews to be let; Wesley chapel is literally empty every Sunday; Ancoats chapel deserted; Grosvenor-street chapel deserted; Oxford-road chapel supported by few; Bridgewater-street chapel a beggarly account of empty pews; Gravel-lane chapel in the same declining condition. Whilst this declension stares every one in the face, the Tabernacle, the chief place of worship of the Association, is crowded to excess every Sabbath-day, from two to three thousand persons regularly being present, and the various preaching houses opened in the town and its neighbourhood thronged. A deaf ear may be turned at the approaching Conference to the wishes and remonstrances of the best friends of Methodism; but, let it not be forgotten, that no aristocratic neglect or priestly intolerance can roll back the ark of freedom, or arrest the onward course of a people ardently aspiring for religious liberty. The opposers of things as they are may be denounced and anathematized as schismatics and disturbers; but, all such subterfuges must be unavailing. Honest and liberal concession, respect for private rights, and a recognition of the principles of freedom and justice, can alone satisfy. With these the Methodist Connexion may, once more, be united, useful, and happy; without them, division and desolation will spread wider and wider, until the fears of Wesley, Benson, and Clarke are realized, and Methodism, as it is, becomes a bye-word in the earth.—*Manchester Times.*

**Whitehaven.**—On Tuesday, 30th ult. the Rev. Dr. Warren met a large assembly of members of the Methodist society and others, in the chapel in Duke-street. The meeting was numerous and highly respectable, and the chapel would have been filled to overflowing had not the number of tickets issued been limited.

The business of the meeting being opened by prayer, the reverend gentleman proceeded at considerable length to expatiate on the conduct of the Conference and of himself, with reference to the late subjects of discussion which have agitated the society. As Dr. Warren's own case and those of other individuals to whom he alluded, have been prominently brought before the public, in speeches and documents to which, on former occasions, we have given place, we refrain from reporting his lecture at length. Dr. Warren is a plain, impressive, correct, and elegant speaker, utterly devoid of affectation or hyperbole, and we have rarely, or never, listened to a discourse characterized by more temper, moderation, and apparent sincerity, or which produced a more powerful effect on those who listened to it. He began by deprecating the idea of his being an emissary of schism or contention, and pointing out that the course he was taking had become a duty, by the arbitrary and unjustifiable conduct of the Conference, both towards individual preachers and the general connexion, and that nothing but the active interference of the great body of the members of the society, in behalf of their own laws and their own privileges, could keep the society together on its original principles; and that the efforts of himself and those with whom he acted, had been to prevent the aggrieved members of the society from deserting it, by holding out to them the hope and prospect of reformation. He then proceeded to detail the despotic and inquisitorial proceedings of the Conference. Their dismissal of Mr. Stephens and other members, on grounds unconnected with any disability for the performance of their ministerial functions; their excision of large bodies of their own society, for reasons totally inadequate; the inconsistency of their conduct in assuming powers to which, within a very recent period, they had never pretended; their progress from a body in harmony with the church of which they were the guardians to one which reduced Methodism to a system of "Pay us money, and do what you are bid." Dr. Warren concluded by a detailed, lucid, and interesting account of their conduct relative to the projected college, and his own expulsion, resulting from his opposition to it.—A liberal collection was made in aid of the legal expenses of the struggle in which Dr. Warren and his friends had been engaged, and but one sentiment seemed to pervade the whole meeting.—On the following morning seventy-five of his friends, comprising nearly all the official members of the

society, partook of breakfast at eight o'clock along with the worthy Doctor in the Wesleyan chapel, Michael-street. Mr. Robert Wilson, of Hensingham, presided on the occasion. After breakfast, being called upon by Dr. Warren, Mr. Peart, Primitive Methodist Minister, offered up an impressive prayer, after which the meeting was addressed at considerable length and with great effect by Dr. Warren, who was followed by Messrs. Gordon, Sherwen, Rigg, Sibson, and Douglas. Dr. Warren concluded with prayer, and the company separated about eleven o'clock, evidently highly gratified with the proceedings of the morning. Such a numerous assembly at so early an hour, and upon so short a notice, being only announced late on the preceding evening, is certainly strongly indicative of the lively interest taken in the promotion of Methodist reform, and on behalf of Dr. Warren, by the Methodist society in this town.—*Whitehaven Herald, July 7.*

*From the New York Evangelist, a Presbyterian Newspaper.*—It is known that there have been recently erected in this city two Methodist Episcopal Churches with pews, called "Wesleyan Chapels," and abandoning the "free seat" principle. We are informed that the one in Crosby-street is a very elegant and costly affair, the pulpit being the most costly, and the seats the most luxurious, in the city. Why they are called Wesleyan we do not understand; for we have seen nothing in Wesley's rules which could give countenance to the lavishment of large sums of money on a rich mahogany pulpit. The following rule of Wesley would seem to bear on the subject. We hope it is not prophetic; yet it stands not alone among the signs of the times. The rule is:—"Let all preaching-houses be built plain and decent, but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable, otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us; but if so, we must be dependent upon them, yea, and governed by them: AND THEN FAREWELL TO THE METHODIST DISCIPLINE, IF NOT DOCTRINE TOO."

*Isle of Man.*—*Sequel to the Proceedings detailed in our last.*—On Tuesday, the 30th ult., according to appointment, a large and respectable audience assembled at the Public Room, in Douglas, for the purpose of hearing the deputation from England. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. James Lamb, Mr. Thompson, from Northwich, and several other gentlemen. We have received an interesting account of the mock trial and ex-

pulsion of Mr. Cain, bookseller, for the heinous crime of selling the *Watchman's Lantern*, in the way of business,—which our limits will not enable us to give in full in the present number.

*Bradford.*—The preachers of the Bradford District, headed by Mr. George Morley, have responded to the summons of the London District, by publishing their resolutions on the present crisis. Amongst them is the following sentence:—

"We therefore unanimously declare our approbation of, and *unutterable* attachment to Wesleyan Methodism as at present constituted, and determine to support it by every means in our power."

"Unutterable" we take to have been substituted by the error of the typographer, for *unalterable*. Now, we beg leave to doubt whether the attachment of Mr. Morley at least, is "unalterable," seeing that the worthy old gentleman, about the close of the last century, when, perhaps, he was of less *weight* than he is now, put his signature to the following liberal declaration:—

"We see no reason to object to the admission of delegates from our Societies into our District Meetings, nor of delegates from our Circuits into the Conference, to assist and advise with us in all matters which properly concern them, as representatives of the people."—*Christian Advocate.*

*London.*—The *Christian Advocate* contains a most interesting account of the attempted expulsion of Mr. Robert Eckett for attending the delegate meeting in Manchester, and advocating the propositions of the London Trustees. Mr. E. most manfully resisted the Jesuitical attempts of the preachers (Messrs. A. Bell and G. Cubitt) to wheedle him into an acknowledgment of an offence; and after several hours' debate the reverend gentlemen were compelled to withdraw the record and vacate the field for want of evidence.

*Darlington.*—The ladies of this town recently gave a tea-party to that noble champion of Methodistical reform, Mr. R. Emmett, of Yarm; a very full report of which, with the excellent addresses delivered on the occasion, appeared in the *Christian Advocate* of June 29.

*Dudley.*—We understand the worthy superintendent of this circuit has withheld tickets from those who will not pledge themselves to support him. The consequence is, that nearly the whole of the members will be excluded. A meeting was held on the 3d instant, at which arrangements were made for providing preaching for the circuit. One of the chapels is to be sold immediately.



## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are obliged to *Vigilans* for calling our attention to the foot note in the *Illuminator*, No. 13, page 204. It had quite escaped our notice amongst the heaps of rubbish in the same chronicle of slander. Certainly a more shameless piece of effrontery we do not remember often, if ever, to have met with, even amongst the choice specimens in the calumniator itself. The editor has the hardihood to state that an exposition of the rules of the society, published at the Conference book-room in 1800, printed at their own press, published by their own book-steward, and sold by the Methodist preachers in town and country, "is nothing more than a gratuitous exposition of Methodistic law, destitute of a name, and published by no authority!!!" To what extremities must a writer be driven for want of arguments, who can coolly and deliberately publish such a barefaced falsehood, and one so easy of detection too. At the Conference of 1796, it was asked, "Can any thing be done to stop the abuse of printing and publishing among us?" After the subject was fully examined, the following regulation, amongst others, was passed. "The book committee (consisting of certain preachers there named) to determine what is proper to be printed." The rules in question were printed in 1800, whilst the regulation was still recent, and, of course, must have been considered by the book committee "proper to be printed." Thirty-five years after this, there comes a man, "learned in the law," who tells us that we are "practising an imposition on the Methodist societies," by quoting a book published by the preachers themselves, which expressly states that "no officer or member can be expelled from the society, but by the consent of the majority of the leaders' meetings." And this man can talk of honesty!!

"Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust,  
Blush if thou canst; not petrified, thou must."

By the bye, speaking of authority, can this learned editor tell us by whose authority the fraud of omitting from the journals of Conference the Plan of Pacification and the Concessions of 1797, was perpetrated? We wonder, to use his own words, that this precious specimen of detected dishonesty "did not lead him to refrain from the attempt of practising an imposition, equally gross, on the Methodist societies. When will he learn common honesty?"

**THE NEW CHAPEL.**—Amongst some wretched attempts at smartness on this subject, in the last *Illuminator*, we meet with the following assertion:—"The fund was formed and the managers appointed by the unanimous resolution of the agitators and disturbers of the societies." By "managers" we suppose he means the persons nominated as trustees at the quarterly meeting last year, by the Rev. S. Jackson. We know of no other "managers" except the preachers. Now the writer of this either knows something of the matter or he does not. If he were not present at the meeting alluded to, he ought to be ashamed to say anything about it; if he were present, and means to assert that a vote of the meeting was taken on the appointment of these "managers," or that the meeting was ever consulted at all on the subject, he utters what he knows to be an untruth, or in Mr. Myles C. Dixon's phraseology, "lies designedly." When people are induced to subscribe money towards building a chapel on the faith of their continuing to have an interest in it as Methodists, and after paying their money are coolly kicked out without a stain on their moral character, with the remark, "there is a division,—there must be a division,—and there shall be a division;" and this, too, without the purpose for which the money was subscribed being carried into effect;—all we have to say is, that the nearest approach to such conduct which we can imagine is,—that of first picking a man's pocket and then kicking him out into the street.

The last *Illuminator* is exceedingly pathetic on the subject of the Superintendent of the Camel-ford circuit being obliged to give up the circuit horse, under a threat of appealing to the law if he refused. It was truly a great hardship to insist upon a man giving up property which did not belong to him; we think, however, that the great Aquila Barber, a man "singularly enough fitted for great actions," would have thought it a greater hardship to have been committed for horse stealing, or even for distributing addresses to which the printer was ashamed to put his name. He wisely enough considered that "the better part of valour is discretion," and preferred giving up the horse to its rightful owners rather than brave the majesty of the offended law.

We feel exceedingly sorry that we could not possibly insert the fourth letter of *Theophilus* in the present number without seriously mutilating it, which we have no desire to do. In our next it shall certainly have a place.

Mr. Frederick Jackson, of Oldham, requests us to state that in the list of delegates assembling in Manchester, his name ought to have been printed with an asterisk, not having been officially appointed, although he attended at the request of a number of members of the society.

We expect to be enabled to insert Mr. Gordon's fifth letter in our next number.

We also acknowledge *Verus*—*A Layman*—*Methodistic*—and communications from Belfast, Carlisle, Manchester, Oldham, Dudley, and Leeds.

No. 20 will be published on Wednesday, the 29th of July.

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Orders and communications, (post paid) must be addressed to the Editors, at the Office of the Association, Music-hall, Bold-street, Liverpool.

Subscriptions will be received by W. SMITH, Esq., (the Chairman) Reddish-house, near Stockport; W. WOOD, Esq., Newton-street, Manchester: at the Offices of the Association, Manchester and Liverpool: and by the Officers and Committee of any Branch Association.

# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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**No. 20.**      WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 1835.      **Price 2d.**

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TO THE WESLEYAN METHODIST PREACHERS,  
ASSEMBLED IN CONFERENCE, AT SHEFFIELD.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN.—Our addressing you on the present occasion demands no apology. We are Methodists, and whatever concerns the welfare of Methodism deeply concerns us. You are now assembled in annual Conference for the purpose of deliberating on the affairs of the Methodist *Connexion*;—not simply to consult the welfare of your own *order*,—not merely to transact the usual routine business of admitting candidates for the ministry, and appointing preachers to the respective chapels;—at this awful crisis matters of far higher and more serious import imperatively demand your attention. Not only the prosperity, but the very existence of Wesleyan Methodism is in jeopardy; and we should ill maintain the character we have assumed of a *Watchman's Lantern* did we not act as a beacon to warn you of the dangerous position in which you stand, as well as a light to illuminate your path, should you deviate from the course of rectitude.

Were a dispassionate observer of passing events to be told that, in a voluntary society established for purposes purely religious, and in which brotherly kindness and charity was the very watchword of union, suddenly, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye, from a cause so apparently insignificant as the establishment of a seminary for the instruction of young ministers, a flame of discontent had spread from one end of the country to the other; were he to see thousands of men, hitherto foremost in every good word and work, all at once set themselves in array against their ministers and pastors, whom, under ordinary circumstances, they have looked up to with reverence and respect,—were he to witness the feelings of soreness and dissatisfaction excited on the one hand, and of contempt and vindictiveness on the other, to the manifest injury of religion and of the spread of gospel truth; such a person would look below the surface for the real springs of action. He would endeavour to trace the tremendous effects already visible, to a sufficiently adequate cause; he would analyze the system of polity by which this society was bound together; he would examine whether their principles of government provided that degree of mutual responsibility between the governors and the governed, without which despotism on the one hand, or anarchy on the other, must be the inevitable result. Ministers of the Methodist Conference! that which would, under these circumstances, be the natural inquiry of an unprejudiced spectator, is imperatively your duty now. Endeavour to de-

scend, for a short time, from the lofty eminence of uncontrollable power. Try to divest yourselves for a few moments of that *esprit du corps* which naturally binds you to stand up for the interests, real or fancied, of your "order," and contemplate the present position of Methodism, with a calm and dispassionate attention. You say, and no doubt believe, that the present wide-spread feelings of discontent, are all the work of a few unprincipled agitators for interested and selfish purposes. Be it so,—one thing at least is proved,—the wolf has been more active in attacking than the shepherds in guarding the flocks. But, is agitation then so congenial to the mind of a Methodist,—are your members so fond of breathing the atmosphere of strife and contention, that for any light or trivial cause, or as you will have it, for no cause at all, they will sacrifice at once their peace of mind and the countenance of their ministers, and suffer themselves to be cast out as worthless weeds from the bosom of that church they love as their own souls? If it be so, whatever the other excellencies of Methodism may be, the production of a meek and quiet spirit in the hearts of its members is, certainly, not its distinguishing feature. But, seriously ask yourselves,—was there ever an instance, in the whole of the records of the Church of Christ, of a people professing godliness, carefully tended by humble, laborious, self-denying pastors, "instant in season and out of season," all at once fancying themselves neglected, ill-used, and tyrannized over, throwing off all restraint and vilifying those whose lives have been spent in seeking to do them good? Diligently search the pages of history, and we venture to assert no such instance will be found. The people never did and never will, never have and never can revolt against a government, whether civil or religious, without some real cause, some grievous wrong which their rulers refuse to set right. And yet, this is the insane conduct of which you accuse *your own* people—the Methodist people—the boasted fruits of your own ministry! Depend upon it, where discontent and complaint are so widely spread amongst the members of a family, something must be wrong in its government. The work of that office and ministry which you profess to have been moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon yourselves, should place you far above all private pique and personal resentment. Do not suffer yourselves to be prevented from fairly bringing the present form of your institutions to the test of Scripture and reason by the absurd and unmeaning phrase that it is *unmethodistical* so to do. Nothing ought to be unmethodistical which would tend to restore peace and harmony to the societies, and promote the prosperity of the cause of religion.

You have been placed, in the course of God's providence, at the head of the Methodist Connexion, and whether responsible to the people or not, an awful weight of responsibility to the Great Head of the church attaches itself to you at the present moment. On your decision, perhaps, hang the eternal destinies of thousands—yea, tens of thousands of immortal souls; and if you refuse to listen to their complaints, if you contemptuously turn a deaf ear to their remonstrances, and coolly consign them to the tender mercies of the world, with irritated minds and wounded feelings, on whose head will the blood of these souls rest? But you will perhaps say, the concessions now required from the Conference are unreasonable and impracticable, and the means adopted to enforce these demands are illegal, cruel, and wicked.

Granting, for argument's sake, that this were even the case, what ought to be the conduct of the good shepherds, the pastors of the flock of Christ, under such circumstances? Ought they to assume the attitude of haughty defiance, and at once anathematize the offending brethren and drive them away from the fold? Ought they obstinately to refuse to listen to the voice of complaint, and by prejudging the question, constantly declaring that "the Conference will make no concessions," do all in their power to drive away their flocks in despair? Ah, no! the voice of conscience, if you will but listen to its dictates, speaks a language far different from this. It tells you that you have not fed the flock of Christ as your Master requires at your hands; you have not "given to every one his meat in due season;" you have not "carried the lambs in your bosom, and gently led those that are with young." It declares to you, in a voice of thunder, that the secular affairs of the society, "the [tithe of mint, anise and cummin," have occupied far too great a portion of that time which ought to have been devoted to visiting from house to house, and anxiously watching over the souls of your people. It proclaims that your darling *power* has been uppermost in your thoughts; to preserve that, no sacrifice has been considered too great, no labour too arduous; the loss of thousands of members has been put as nothing when compared with the preservation of this dearly-loved and dearly-bought idol. We are willing to give you every credit for sincerity in your conduct, but your views of your own interests, and those of the society at large, have been distorted, because seen through the mists of party prejudice. We do not, we will not, defend *all* the proceedings of your opponents; but human nature, smarting under feelings of irritation, disappointment, and chagrin requires some allowances to be made, if the precise boundary line which separates zeal from indiscretion should sometimes be overstepped.

What, then, shall the sword devour for ever? Shall the feelings of obstinate defiance on the one hand, and vindictive resentment on the other, be perpetuated *in secula seculorum*, or at least until the Connexion is torn asunder by its own intestine commotions? God forbid! be such conduct far from us. Now is the time for mutual forbearance, charity, and forgiveness. Let us all, both preachers and people, show a splendid example to the world, how much we can yield to each other, for the sake of the prosperity of our Zion. Let us put the best and most charitable construction on each other's motives and conduct.

Our principles and requirements are simply these:—We are all, both preachers and people, human beings; sinners saved by grace; but still exposed to all the short-sightedness, frailties, and infirmities of our common nature. Every system of polity, therefore, whether in the church or out of it, which intends the mutual advantage of all parties, must recognise a mutual responsibility between those who preside and those who are governed. Methodism, as at present constituted, does not recognise this mutual responsibility, and, therefore, the necessity for a change. Providence seems, at this very crisis, strangely to have laid this necessity upon you. Not to insist on the discontent and agitation spread so extensively through the societies, your boasted concessions of 1795 and 1797, so frequently referred to as the *magna charta* of the liberties of the Methodist people, are suddenly discovered to want the sanction of the only act which could constitute them laws of



the Connexion; you are, therefore, necessitated to frame a new code. In doing this, the golden opportunity is afforded you of not only satisfying your friends, and restoring peace to the Connexion, but of conciliating even your enemies, and disappointing the machinations of your adversaries, by disarming them of their weapons. The general cry of your supporters is, that you will do something to satisfy your friends, but nothing for the Association. Oh! discard this puerile,—this anti-Christian threat. If you do give at all, give liberally; let your laws be in accordance with the principles of British freedom,—deliver yourselves from the trammels of pecuniary affairs, which have so long pressed like an incubus on your usefulness,—give to your brethren the birthrights of every Englishman, freedom of speech, and a voice in the enactment of the laws by which he is to be governed; and though you resign no power which any Christian men ought to possess, your conduct will be hailed by every Methodist as noble and heroic,—you will effectually silence your enemies, gratify your best friends, and find your reward a hundred-fold in the warm and zealous attachment of a grateful and affectionate people.

And even if you could retain the power which you at present assume,—if you could lull the angry waves of strife and contention to a deceitful calm,—if you could hush the voice of complaint to the very stillness of death, what would it profit you? Is there any power to be compared with that of doing good to the souls of men? Is there any government so strong as that founded in mutual love and affection? Oh, then, “be wise in time,” for “’tis madness to defer!” As for minor points and details we will not even allude to them,—it is principle for which we contend,—the great principle of mutual responsibility producing mutual confidence. But, remember now is the time for showing a noble spirit of conciliation. Should you madly risk another year of convulsion, we shudder at the consequences; the vantage ground on which you now stand, if once lost, can never be again recovered. This is the moment for reconciliation and peace.

“————— Oh! let it not elude your grasp,  
But, like the good old patriarch upon record,  
Hold the fleet angel fast until he bless you.”

We have now discharged our duty; we have warned you of the dangerous position in which you stand; and we have honestly and from conviction stated freely our opinions. Our interference may be considered presumptuous and intrusive; we may be termed disaffected and reckless disturbers of the peace of a Christian society. Would that peace might be restored to the Connexion as easily as these terms may be applied to us! If bearing the weight of every opprobrious epithet which could be hurled at us would purchase the welfare of Methodism, we would gladly be pronounced accursed for our brethren’s sake. We can appeal to the Searcher of all hearts for the purity of our motives in the present contest. We did not enter into it without counting the cost, and the issue we leave to Providence. And now to God and his grace we commit you. May He guide you into that spirit by which his glory and the welfare of the Connexion may be best insured, and may the blessing of Him whose wisdom maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it, rest upon, and preside over, all your deliberations.

We are, your brethren in Christ,

THE EDITOR AND CONDUCTORS OF THE WATCHMAN’S LANTERN.

## PROCEEDINGS AT TODMORDEN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

[Continued from page 293.]

The question of a circuit steward to be resident at Todmorden was now resumed. Against it, it was said, to have three circuit stewards was an anomaly in Methodism, and that the superintendent neither would nor could conscientiously nominate one any way connected with the Association. On that point his mind was made up. Much discussion ensued. Amongst others the ex-steward said he cared not one straw as for himself about the office, and he would have the meeting lose sight of him, but notwithstanding, as it had been their *usage*, to have *three* circuit stewards, he exhorted them not to give up their *ancient privilege*, and to insist upon the matter being there and then concluded, whether the people were to have any *say* in it or not, whether a preacher resident with them only for a short time, had a *right* to say to the people, "although your officers, and those whom you want for officers, live among you, and are better known to you than they possibly can be to me, yet it is my pleasure and will, for reasons best known to myself, that you *shall* have such and such individuals, and no others, or else be without?" If the case were so, was it not as clear as the sunbeams, that all power was lodged in the hands of the preachers? Here the chairman said, the great principle of Conference legislation was, to secure *negative* power to the people, and *positive* power to the preachers. But, replied the ex-steward, surely in local affairs, and especially in the choice of officers, the people *ought* to have some *positive* power. And if the *Magazine* for 1829 was any authority on the subject, (and, being one of the Conference organs, he thought it as good an authority as could be produced,) the people could *require* the superintendent to nominate till an individual was found who was satisfactory to the majority. At page 329, (May, 1829,) were the following words:—"That, as to the appointment of officers, the nomination of the superintendent may be rejected by the meetings concerned, and a second or a third nomination be thus made necessary, until a person agreeable to the majority of the meeting be found." He trusted, therefore, that the superintendent would be induced to nominate some one. On the ground of the Association being at Todmorden, he persisted in refusing, and the chairman justified his refusal. The ex-steward then said, in part, as follows:—"Whatever some may think of the members of the Wesleyan Reform Association, I must declare it as my deliberate and conscientious opinion that it embraces some of the best friends of Methodism; and I am sorry that there should be—even among those who were set apart to teach us better things,—so much surmising and evil speaking, respecting persons who differ from them in judgment. Believing, in common with many others, that the Wesleyan reformers are not the enemies of Methodism, as calumny would exhibit them, I cannot see a sufficient reason for the superintendent's refusal to nominate for office a Wesleyan reformer. But if he judge that a person's character is so objectionable as to unfit him for *one* office, will not the *same* unfitness disqualify him for *another* office? If the individual is too criminal for a circuit steward, is he not too wicked for a leader? And if too sinful to be a leader, is he not utterly unfit to be a private member? And if one person in one society is thus unworthy of a place amongst you, is not another person, of precisely the *same* character, in another society, equally unworthy? I am amazed, Sir, at the inconsistency and partiality I behold. Either abandon your principle at once, or carry it out fairly, and exclude from membership, without exception, all those persons deemed so objectionable and wicked. [We might have added, Then, Sir, see if the *effect* of excommunication in such cases will not be the very reverse of what the awful proceeding should be. Instead of branding the anathematized with inevitable disgrace, will it not be deemed an honour both in the church and out of it? And can it be right thus to invert the order which Christ has ordained in his church?] The subject before us is a material question,—one involving the rights and privileges of the church,—one as to what power the people possess, and whether the preachers *can* deprive them of it. And now, after having tried, but tried in vain, to get the thing settled in a formal and strictly Methodistical manner, I consider myself at liberty, in all fairness, in order properly to test the point, to move the appointment of another circuit steward as my successor; and, if I have a seconder, to call upon you, Sir, to take the sense of the meeting on the subject. I therefore move, that Mr. Eli Sutcliffe be the circuit steward resident at Todmorden." This motion, after being seconded, was *refused* to be put by the chairman. The ex-steward then said, "Driven to this extremity, and

being deprived of all other means of obtaining the sense of the meeting, I must at all risks take the further liberty of calling for a show of hands myself." The Chairman said, "If this course be taken, I shall be obliged to vacate the chair, and dissolve the meeting." At this moment the superintendent, Mr. Roberts, rose and nominated an individual, Mr. William Suthers, who, although not connected with the Association, was nevertheless approved of by the reformers; and so this part of the business was at length brought to an amicable close, very much to the satisfaction of most parties, the ex-steward remarking, "It appears that our superintendent *can* act when the *negative* power, as it has been termed, compels him."

The next topic was the grievances now unhappily existing in the Connexion, in reference to which it may be proper to state, that, at the March quarterly meeting the following memorial to Conference was adopted:—"We, the stewards, local preachers, and leaders of the Todmorden Circuit, in quarterly meeting assembled, deem it our imperative duty at the present eventful crisis to express to you—1st, Our warm and unhesitating, candid, and conscientious attachment to Wesleyan Methodism; we regard it as the greatest work under heaven; a system which has proved a blessing to myriads of immortal souls: we love its ordinances, we esteem and venerate its ministers, and believe its laws, when judiciously and affectionately administered, will preserve us from tyranny on the one hand, and from anarchy and confusion on the other. 2d, We deeply regret the present agitated state of our beloved Connexion, and greatly fear that, unless some healing and efficient measures are speedily adopted, the consequences may be fatal in disorganizing the system, and turning multitudes away from the paths of righteousness and peace. We have confidence in our pastors, and doubt not the subject will receive the deep consideration which its importance demands; and whatever can, (consistently with the Constitution and discipline of the body,) will be done to meet the views and wishes of all parties. 3d, We would respectfully suggest the following,—(leaving to the Conference the adoption of such other measures as may be deemed necessary,)—such a revision and reform of the laws of the Connexion as may clear them of all ambiguity, and render them incapable of a double interpretation, worded in the most definite phraseology, and published in a detached and cheap form." It was asked whether this memorial had yet been sent off? Being answered in the negative, the querist said, "Without intending to find fault with this memorial, which has been passed in a Methodistical way, I may be permitted to say that it does not *particularize* the grievances of which the people complain; nor detail what *we* consider the *causes* of the widely-spread and deeply-rooted dissatisfaction in the body. Some of those causes, in my opinion, and I have reason to know in the opinion of very many of our people, are—'The *unconstitutional interference* of the Special District Meeting in the ever-to-be-deplored Leeds affair;—the introduction, by Conference, of a test in reference to the metaphysical and non-essential doctrine of the Eternal Sonship, and the consequent *expulsion* of a useful and faithful minister;—the *decided*, and as we think, the *erroneous* opinions which Conference has adopted and promulgated relative to the *unhallowed and unscriptural union of Church and State*, and the *expulsion* of a talented and zealous minister, who conscientiously objected to such union;—the establishment of the Theological Institution, not merely *without* the consent, but *against* the wishes of the great body of our people, and without so much as asking the opinion of the people; in part supporting such institution from the missionary fund and from the profits of the book room, (which profits *are*, or *ought to be*, appropriated to the same purpose as the yearly and July collections;);—the trial of Dr. Warren for having published an able and a temperate pamphlet against the Institution;—the assumption, by the preachers, of a *power to prevent free discussion* in our quarterly meetings, by refusing to put to the vote resolutions regularly moved and seconded by accredited members of such meetings, if the resolution happen to be displeasing to the presiding preacher;—the *insulting threat* to vacate the chair, and thereby, in his view, to dissolve the meeting. Then, if the parties so treated should meet together, or continue the meeting after the preacher has retired, they are told it is an illegal meeting, and excommunication must be their doom if they dare to hold meetings not sanctioned by the superintendent. The *wicked expulsion* of pious and truly useful members, not merely not in conjunction with, but in declared opposition to, a majority of the leaders' meeting. An assumption of such powers as these I unhesitatingly declare to be un-English, unscriptural, and alike *disgraceful* to the party requiring, and to the party submitting to it. The alteration, in late editions of our rules, of that *very important one* which expressly says, "No leader or steward can be put out of his place, but by a majority

of leaders or a quarterly meeting. Neither can any member of the society be excluded but by a majority at a leaders' meeting." And the Jesuitical attempt to make the terms, "in conjunction with," to mean only "in the presence of," the leaders. The contemptuous manner in which Conference has treated memorials from different circuits; the unchristian-like language and terms of scornful defiance used in the *Magazine* and in the printed resolutions of various district meetings, in reference to the conscientious reformers of Conference Methodism.' Now, Sir, I deem it right and proper that we should not keep the Conference in the dark respecting our opinion as to these causes; and as the memorial does not specify them in detail, I beg permission to propose that two of our oldest and best informed lay brethren be requested to be the bearers of the memorial, and to receive the answer, then they will be able, when meeting with the preachers, individually and incidentally, to converse with them on these painful subjects, and likewise with lay friends from other places, with a view to devising measures of redress. I beg to move, therefore, that Mr. Wm. Thompson and Mr. Joshua Fielden be desired to be the bearers of this memorial." This was seconded; but the chairman disallowed its being put for want of a precedent, and said the memorial must be in the custody of the superintendent. It was then stated that, making allowance for the peculiar position of the chairman, that matter would not be further pressed; but such was the conviction on the minds of many in the meeting that such a step was absolutely necessary at this crisis, that mere informality could not be suffered to deter them from taking it, and, therefore, it was announced that after this meeting was closed, another would be held immediately for the express purpose. The meeting now concluded by singing and prayer, and while Mr. Galland was addressing the throne of Divine grace, we had a powerful and profitable time.

As above stated, at near nine o'clock the second meeting assembled, and after having considered that they had tried all in their power to get the thing done with Methodistical formality, but had failed, they were unanimous in thinking themselves justified in passing the following resolutions:—

*Resolved*, 1. "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Methodist constitution has been broken; that it is necessary to require the breach to be repaired; that in order to this, delegates should assemble at Sheffield during the next Conference; and that the delegates sent by this meeting be authorized to agree to whatever a majority of the delegate meeting decide upon; and also instructed to advocate the introduction of lay representatives into Conference, as co-legislators with the preachers, as the best security for the rights and privileges of both preachers and people.

2. "That Messrs. Wm. Thompson and Joshua Fielden be the delegates deputed by this meeting to attend the adjourned meeting of delegates, to be held in Sheffield during the next Conference."

The above particulars were penned down from memory after the meeting, and therefore it is not pretended that they are altogether *verbatim*, but we believe they contain the substance of what passed in the quarterly meeting.

Yours, &c.

J. H. and E. S.

Todmorden, July 6, 1835.

## ROCHDALE CIRCUIT.

At the Wesleyan quarterly meeting of this circuit, held on the 1st instant, an address to the next Conference was regularly moved and seconded; but the chairman, in accordance with the present discriminating practice of objecting to all complaints, and encouraging all eulogies of the conduct of Conference, refused to put it to the vote.

In December last the Rochdale circuit prayed the President (through Mr. Garrett, the superintendent) to call a special meeting of the "hundred" composing the Conference, to allay, if possible, the discontent then existing in the societies, and to prevent its increase, at the same time offering to bear their share of the expense which might be incurred. The President, in reply to Mr. Garrett, wrote as follows:—"In answer to the request that I would call together the hundred who compose the legal Conference, and the proposal that your circuit will bear its part of the expense, I can only say, that no such request has come



from any other circuit; and that you and your friends must be aware that I have neither rule nor example to sanction such a step. If, however, your stewards will, in June or July, state every *grievance, real or supposed*, which they and your circuit feel, you can state that *you and I will engage* to lay such memorial before the Conference." The July meeting pleaded their right to be heard on this as well as other grounds, but the chairman persisted in his refusal.

Fearing that increased dissatisfaction would result from this refusal, and that, consequently, the spiritual interests of the circuit, and, ultimately, the pecuniary affairs of the chapels, would be greatly injured, the trustees of the Rochdale chapel, after serious deliberation, determined to take upon themselves the responsibility of calling a meeting of all the office-bearers in the circuit. This meeting was held on the 15th instant, when the following Address (similar to the one proposed to the quarterly meeting,) was agreed to, 66 officers being present, 58 of whom voted for it, five against it, and three were neutral, and was subsequently signed by the individuals whose names are annexed.

#### ADDRESS TO THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

*Rochdale, February 15th, 1835.*

*Reverend Fathers and Dear Brethren*,—Our beloved Connexion being in a most awfully agitated state, we are anxiously solicitous that, at your present Conference, measures may be adopted which will restore that peace and harmony to the church, without which it is vain to expect permanent prosperity. And we conceive, that if you are put in possession of the honest sentiments of the different Societies, in reference to the matters in dispute, you will be greatly aided in your deliberations, and more likely to arrive at a satisfactory and happy decision. We, therefore, feel it to be our solemn, and we may add painful duty, to state to you what, in our opinion, are the causes of, and the remedy for, the dissatisfaction and discontent now so unhappily existing amongst the people over whom you preside.

*The Causes*.—The unconstitutional interference of the special district meeting in the ever-to-be-deplored Leeds affair.—The introduction of a Test, relative to the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship, and the consequent expulsion of a useful and faithful minister.—The decided, and, as we think, erroneous opinions which Conference has adopted and promulgated, with regard to the union of Church and State, having thereby caused valuable ministers to retire from the Connexion, and grieved the minds of thousands of our members.—The establishment of the Theological Institution, and in part supporting it from the missionary fund, not merely without the consent, but against the wishes of the great body of our people.—The trial of Dr. Warren, for having published a pamphlet against the Institution.—The assumption, by the preachers, of a power to prevent free discussion in our quarterly meetings, by refusing to put to the vote resolutions regularly moved and seconded by accredited members of such meetings, or threatening to vacate the chair, and thereby dissolve the meeting; and if parties so threatened should meet together, or continue the meeting after the preacher has so vacated the chair, they are told it is an illegal meeting; and excommunication must be their doom if they dare to hold meetings not sanctioned by the superintendent.—The expulsion of pious and truly useful members and officers, not only not "in conjunction with," but in opposition to, a majority of the leaders' meeting: powers such as these we unhesitatingly declare to be unscriptural, and alike disgraceful to the party requiring and the party submitting to them.—The alteration in late editions of our rules of that very important one which expressly says "No leader or steward can be put out of his place but by a majority of leaders or a quarterly meeting. Neither can any member of the society be excluded but by a majority at a leaders' meeting."—The disrespectful manner in which Conference has treated memorials from various circuits, of which this circuit can furnish a grievous instance.—The very objectionable language, and terms of defiance, used in reference to the conscientious reformers of Conference Methodism.—(See the Magazine and the printed resolutions of different district meetings, &c.)—The discovery of the unaccountable and (we greatly fear) designed omission of the Plan of Pacification from the Conference journals, thereby rendering the so called charter of Methodism null and void.—The exclusive management of so many of the funds of the Connexion, by the preachers or their nominees.—These, Reverend Fathers and dear Brethren, we humbly submit are among the chief causes of the widely-spread and deeply-rooted discontent which now so perniciously pervades the Con-

nexion: but the greatest cause, and that out of which these and all others flow, is the total exclusion of the laity from all legislative, and from all, or nearly all, executive power.

Therefore, the great, the sole REMEDY for these evils is, the immediate admission of the PEOPLE to such a share of power in the government of the church, that their express concurrence shall be necessary in all important matters, especially those of legislation, finance, and the administration of discipline.

Having now, Reverend Fathers and dear Brethren, stated to you our sentiments on this momentous subject, we do hope that, how erroneous soever you may think them, or how low soever your opinion of our judgment may be, you will at least give us credit for purity of motive. To this we know we are entitled.

We have deputed our highly-esteemed brethren, Messrs. Booth, Petrie, Hoyle, and Ashworth, to present this address to you; and we earnestly request you will appoint some of your members to confer with them on its contents. We are open to conviction, and shall be happy to receive from you, through them, such correction of our errors, and such explanations as you may be enabled to offer; and that which cannot be satisfactorily explained we most respectfully, yet firmly, require to be effectually reformed.

Praying the great Head of the Church to bless, to guide, and to prosper you,

We are,

Reverend Fathers and dear Brethren,

Yours, truly,

JAMES HOYLE, Circuit Steward, Trustee, Leader, and Chairman of the Meeting.

Samuel Heape, Circuit Steward, Trustee, Local Preacher, and Leader.	Robert Mills, do.
Thomas Booth, Town Steward, Trustee, and Leader.	Sam. Harrison, Local Preacher and Leader.
William Standring, Town Steward, Trustee, and Leader.	John Pollitt, do.
James Wright, Local Preacher.	William Whittaker, do.
John Lee, Leader.	John Milne, do.
John Gorton, Leader and Steward.	Robert Chadwick, Steward.
Thomas Gorton, Leader and Steward.	William Holt, Leader.
John Meadowcroft, Local Preacher.	Edmund Holt, do.
Stephen Broad, Leader.	Whittaker Dean, Trustee.
James Hartley, Trustee.	William Driver, Leader.
James Shepherd, Leader.	Samuel Wood, Trustee.
Moses Chertham, Trustee, Local Preacher, and Leader.	John Hoyle, jun. do.
Samuel Standring, Trustee.	Ellis Jones, do.
A. Edmonson, Trustee and Leader.	Thomas Booth, jun. do.
George Ashworth, Trustee.	James Hoyle, do.
John Howard, Trustee.	John Ormerod, do.
John Petrie, Trustee and Leader.	Oliver Ormerod, do.
James Turner, Trustee.	Daniel Wild, Trustee.
George Mellor, Local Preacher.	Thomas Taylor, Trustee and Leader.
Joseph Richardson, do.	John Taylor, Trustee.
Richard Slater, Leader.	John Fitton, Trustee.
James Fletcher, do.	Isaac Holt, Local Preacher and Leader.
Joseph Hilton, do.	John Wilkinson, Local Preacher and Leader.
John Kershaw, Trustee and Leader.	Thomas Shaw, Trustee.
John Butterworth, Local Preacher and Leader.	James Wilson, Local Preacher.
James Brierley, Local Preacher.	John Kershaw, do. and Leader.
Thomas Whalley, Leader.	Joseph Heape, Trustee, Local Preacher, and Leader.
Charles Renshaw, Local Preacher.	James Nuttall, Leader.
Charles Standring, Trustee.	Jonathan Clough, do.
William Thornber, Local Preacher and Leader.	Luke Dues, do.
James Schofield, Leader.	Thomas Woolfenden, Trustee.
William Cockcroft, Leader.	Wm. Heap, Trustee, Leader, and Steward.
James Greenhalgh, do.	William Leach, Leader.
James Horrocks, do.	Thomas Dyson, Leader.
Elisba Townsend, Trustee, Local Preacher, and Leader.	John Ashworth, Trustee and Leader.
Edward Hardcastle, Leader.	James Holt, Leader.
Jonathan Brownhill, Trustee.	Robert Fitton, Leader.
	John Griffith, Local Preacher and Leader.
	William Lord, Trustee.
	John Mills, Local Preacher.
	James Tweedale, Trustee.

## PROCEEDINGS AT PRESCOT.

### RESIGNATION OF MR. RICHARD BROWN, A LEADER, LOCAL PREACHER, AND TRUSTEE IN THE ST. HELEN'S AND PRESCOT CIRCUIT.

"If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, let the enemy persecute my soul and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust."

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Let him that loves God love his brother also, is a commandment which seems to be entirely forgotten by the Rev. James Smetham, (superintendent of this circuit,) as will appear from the following statement.—Nothing is at present farther from my intention than a misrepresentation of facts; and although I cannot pledge myself as to verbal accuracy, yet you will here find a fair statement (unglossed by personal friendship, and unstained by party hate,) of a strange, ay, passing strange event, which has recently occurred in this circuit, a circuit hitherto peaceable, which till lately remained steady mid the storms which were raging on every hand; and our vessel here would in all probability have outrid the tempest had it not been for the ruthless conduct of Mr. Smetham and his associates, who have contrived to rid themselves of one of the oldest members in this circuit, a man, Sir, who for upwards of thirty years has been a consistent member of the Methodist Society, and who has for some time filled the responsible offices of class leader and local preacher with credit to himself and profit to those with whom he had to do; but as he could not, consistently with Christian principles, sanction the unchristian and tyrannical conduct of the travelling preachers, and having, with some more honest men, sent to the *Christian Advocate* a statement of their sentiments with regard to the Declaration of London Trustees, both he and they, by this avowal of liberal sentiments, incurred the hot displeasure of their priestly ruler, who has since then sought occasion for finding fault; but, failing in this, he determined that he himself would give the first blow. Accordingly, two new leaders were appointed of Mr. Smetham's principles; and one of them, who had previously been a member in Mr. Brown's class, agreed to meet four members of society (*all of them taken from Mr. Brown's class*) on Tuesday evenings, at eight o'clock, in the vestry of Prescott chapel.—Mr. Brown's class meeting on the same evening, in the same place, at seven o'clock, and scarcely ever concluding before half-past eight!!! The new leader mentioned this strange arrangement to Mr. Brown, who told him that he knew they usually continued till half-past eight; but that he, the new leader, should make his own hours, and Mr. Brown would accommodate him as much as possible. Mr. Smetham seeing that this treatment, bad as it was, could not induce Mr. Brown to break rule, and being now driven to his wit's end, and almost despairing of being able to agitate the society, hit upon a new scheme. And mark his plan. On Wednesday evening, 15th July, he called at Mr. Brown's, and while there talking with Mr. B.'s brother, said that he would rather have Mr. Brown for his right-hand man than any he knew!! But before leaving the house, he contrived to procure either a subscription or donation from Mr. B., in aid, I believe, of the superannuated preachers' fund.\* Mr. Brown afterwards went to chapel; Mr. Smetham preached; after preaching, a leaders' meeting was held. The business being gone through, and the meeting having all but separated, one of the leaders said that his mind had been much hurt by certain words which he said had been used respecting him by Brother Scarisbrick. Mr. Scarisbrick not being present to refute any ungrounded charge that might be brought against him, Mr. Brown stood up in his defence, and after speaking on the charge brought against Mr. Scarisbrick, asked Mr. Smetham if it were in accordance with Methodistic usage for one leader to supplant another? Mr. Smetham, in reply, was of course obliged to say that it was not, but that he sanctioned it in Mr. Brown's case, owing to the circumstances in which they were placed, and to counterbalance Mr. Brown's influence over the minds of the people!!!! Such an insult, so wantonly offered, and that, too, by the same man who scarcely three hours before had so fawningly complimented him, induced Mr. Brown to resign his class-book and plan. Some of the leaders urged Mr. Brown not to resign, at least till after Conference; and even Mr. Spencer, the new leader, into whose class the four members had changed, entreated

\* Si posses, redi; si non, quoquoque modo rene

Mr. Brown, with tears in his eyes, to resume his office, when Mr. Smetham, who seemed to wait only for an opportunity of venting his spleen, said with much apparent glee, that he accepted his resignation with pleasure!!!

Is such conduct like Methodism? It may, indeed, be a fair sample of Methodism as it is, or Popery as it was; but, Sir, it is as far different from true Christianity as darkness from light. Mr. Smetham, a few Sundays since, was telling us that if a man love not his brother, (it matters not what his professions may be,) he has no more religion than a stone. I would now, Sir, ask any man of common sense, which has more religion, a stone or his reverence? Mr. Smetham's conduct needs no comment; he has at length commenced his work of scattering a flock which he never gathered, but, Sir, I trust that his triumph will be of short duration; I trust, Sir, that we shall soon again see the pleasure of the Lord prosper amongst us, and that we shall soon see Methodism bursting from bonds inglorious (unshackled by either a domineering priesthood or a persecuting world,) regain its original excellence and native simplicity.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Prescot, 24th July, 1835.

J. A.

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## ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

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### LETTER IV.

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"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."—*Jeremiah* xvii, 9, 10.

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### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—At the conclusion of my last letter the court was assembled, and the culprit arraigned at the bar, the law was laid down, the judge on the bench, the jury impanelled, and the witnesses in the box, but the trial was adjourned until this auspicious moment, and now it must proceed. The jurisdiction of the court is unquestioned, for the culprit himself has appealed to its decision.\* His "name is LEGION," but his official title is "The Wesleyan Methodist Conference," and he stands charged with the crimes of "assuming and exercising an unauthorized and despotic power over the consciences and rights of the members of the churches of God placed under his pastoral care, to the destruction of the peace and prosperity of those churches; with the unjust and arbitrary expulsion therefrom of many wise, holy, and active men, who were both ornaments to their profession and pillars of the Methodist Connexion, to the manifest injury thereof, and endangering its existence as a religious society." To this indictment the accused has "pleaded the general issue" of "NOT GUILTY;" and for trial he appeals to *his own testimony of his innocence*; not denying the facts, but attempting their justification upon the pretext that he acts upon Divine authority. The validity of this plea is the question at issue. There are three sources from whence ecclesiastical power may be derived, namely,—1. Divine authority. 2. Human delegation. 3. Self assumption. The first two of these sources are legitimate, and their operation, when conformable to the great Christian "law of love," salutary and beneficial. The third is spurious, and carries "the mark of the beast" emblazoned on its brazen forehead, and its tyrannical footsteps are every where marked with MISERY, DESOLATION, and WOE!

I have already attempted some definition of the extent of the first source, as bearing upon the claims and acts of the Conference, which has issued in their unequivocal condemnation: the second now claims a brief attention. Human delegation of ecclesiastical power, it is evident, can neither rise above its source in its essential nature, nor ever cast off the control of its authors. It must be either conveyed by direct communication, or claimed by hereditary bequeathment and successive inheritance. The principle of the former mode is simply that of gratuitous concession; and it is, of course, resumable at the pleasure of the donor; the character of the latter is that of a complete *nullity*, depending entirely upon the former for its precarious existence. Neither the laws of God, of nature, or of England, know any thing of such a chimerical nonentity as bequeathed or hereditary ecclesiastical power in a sectarian association like Wesleyan

\* Both the *Watchman* and the *Illuminator* are proper appeals to the acknowledged jurisdiction of the "COURT OF CONSCIENCE" in which we are now sitting.



Methodism. Mr. Wesley well knew this, and hence his uniform confession that all his power in the Connexion was derived from the people; that it would die with himself; and that it never would be conceded, in the same plenitude of authority, to the preachers after his decease.

To remedy this radical defect in the constitution of Methodism, as far as in him lay, Mr. Wesley attempted, by his celebrated "Deed Poll," to give it a visible and tangible shape in the eye of the law, and to place it under the protection of the British courts of judicature to the end of time. But he soon found that the only accessible court open to his attempt was that which is *emphatically* styled the Court of CHANCERY, in the decisions of which there may be a possible chance that, if adequate wisdom, integrity, and fortitude should influence the mind of its judge, the equity of the case at issue may form the basis of his judgment. In this court the despotism of the Conference, in its jurisdiction over the members of its own body, has been recently confirmed; but its reluctant sentence, *founded on the folly of Methodism*, was accompanied, in its pronouncement, with some bitterly sarcastic and galling insinuations against that despotic tyranny and merciless obduracy, which, "like a stanch murderer," thus pursued its amiable victim to the verge of its misapplied and inflexible vengeance. But Dr. Warren, in addition to the placid approbation of his own conscience, will, I trust, also have the consolation of knowing that he has been not merely the victim of the malevolent revenge of his implacable enemies, but the originator of a movement which will issue in the redemption of Methodism from the curse of despotic power, under the scorpion lash of which this excellent man has been virtually driven out of the Connexion. His case will constitute a powerful branch of that irresistible requisition which will now either enforce the reformation, or accelerate the dissolution of the Methodist body.

In addition to Mr. Wesley's own explicit avowal, when taxed with the assumption of immoderate power, *that he neither sought nor coveted his power in the Connexion, but that it was confided to him by the people*, we have the decisive and unexceptionable testimony of the late Joseph Benson, one of the best judges of the fact that the Connexion has ever produced. In the admirable letter of that wise and judicious man of God, addressed to Mr. Wesley himself, and so happily published in the 17th number of the *Lantern*, we find the following evidence to the point at issue. The case arose out of Mr. Wesley's refusal to permit his preachers to be instrumental in promoting the salvation of souls in a chapel "which was not settled upon the Conference plan," and to such an extent had Mr. Wesley's thirst for this monopoly of chapels prevailed, that it appears the jeopardy of fifteen hundred or two thousand souls was reckoned a trifling risk, *even if they should be eternally lost*, in support of that sacred monopoly. Hence those awful words are ascribed to Mr. Wesley's pen on the occasion. "No matter,—*let them perish*,—we destroy them not; they destroy themselves in that they will not settle their house according to our plan." But what says the evangelical Benson to the wisdom and piety of this benevolent decision? Hear him:—"Are we not missing the very end we aim at?—*stretching the string till it breaks*, and in this violent contention for power, losing the power that we have? That power arises from the people's love to us, and their love to us is the fruit of our usefulness to them; let us continue to be useful to them, and they will continue to love us, and we shall continue to possess all the power a wise [and good] man would wish for,—a power to do people good. This power, and together with it *all our influence in spiritual matters* [which love alone can secure] we are depriving ourselves of as fast as we can. But as a recompense for this loss, human laws have given us power over the bricks and timber of a house, and we can, let who will hinder, send preachers to preach where, by-and-by, it may be, none will be present to hear."

If this testimony to the growing corruption of the body, even under the auspices of its "venerable founder" himself, does not read a useful lesson to the Conference, which has been grasping at the same unhallowed object ever since the period of its production, 47 years ago, we must conclude that its vices are incorrigible, and its folly incurable, and that nothing short of the entire alienation of the people's affections, and with that, the loss of all "spiritual influence" over their minds, and the consequent dissolution of the Connexion, can open the eyes of the infatuated preachers to the absolute madness of their iniquitous conduct. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat!*

Conscious of the precarious tenure of their hold upon the affections of the people, depending as this must ever do upon the fluctuating piety and declining zeal of the preachers, those *prudential* men have long been plotting to establish their power upon a more permanent basis; and hence their strenuous

monopoly both of the chapels themselves, and of their own exclusive right to preach in them. And hence also their inveterate hostility to the principle of lay representation of the people in all their Conferential and provincial assemblies, and the studied abridgment of the people's power in all *their* local meetings, which have so long marked, and so pointedly disgraced, the policy of the preachers. Fain would they be so independent of the people that they might safely give the reins to the full sway of their despotic tyranny, and rule the Connexion, in every part of its economy and discipline, with a rod of iron, without any responsibility save to that one awful tribunal from whose retributive justice, indeed, they cannot escape, except by repentance, for their reckless provocation of its vengeance.

This is the natural result of "Methodism as it is." According to Dr. Bunting's celebrated comparison, *Satanic* and *Democratic* influence are perfectly on a par in Conferential estimation. This, however, must be an incorrect statement, if Jonathan Crowther's portrait of Conference wisdom, meekness, and harmony, as exhibited in the *Lantern* No. 17, be not a *caricature* likeness; for that gentleman assures us that even in his day the true President of the Conference was "THE DEVIL," who, as he tells us, was uniformly to be seen *perching on the front of the gallery*, enjoying, in hearty glee, the sport of the scene below, which, as Jonathan informs us, was something very like "THE ASSEMBLY IN A COCKPIT!" Meantime, the weeping heavens, who with very different sensations also viewed this tumultuous "strife of tongues," might well exclaim, in reference to the departed glory of Methodism, *only five years after the death of its founder*,—*Sic transit gloria mundi!* But what would the glorified spirits of Wesley and Fletcher say to it?

Surely, Sir, these gentlemen have *forgotten* that for every idle word they speak, as well as for every act of oppression they perpetrate, and every omission of duty of which they are guilty, they must give an awful account at the judgment seat of Christ! It is as clear as the meridian sun, that the objects of their ambitious pursuit are no longer the peace and prosperity of the Connexion, as exhibiting "the image and glory of God, in righteousness and true holiness," but WEALTH, POWER, and POPULARITY. It is in their worship of these "gods of the world," nourishers of the flesh and engines of the devil, that they are so wantonly trampling upon the rights of the people, and ejecting from their body some of the brightest stars that yet adorn its fading hemisphere. With the ruling faction of Methodism, freedom of speech is a crime, truth is suppressed, and integrity punished with expulsion. Thus powerfully does "the mystery of iniquity already work" in this once holy and happy community of professing Christians! But it is hastening to its destruction; not, perhaps, in its external fabric and nominal constitution: no, as "Wesleyan Methodism," supported by that world at whose feet it is now to be seen crouching,—that is, for the perishing riches and honours of this transitory life,—it may long continue, not only to exist, but to flourish and prosper also, the stalking shadow of its primitive piety, arrayed in the gaudy trappings of its fallen and degraded character. Yes, the day may yet come wherein "WESLEYAN METHODISM" shall rival its great prototype POPERY, in the accumulation of wealth, in the magnificence of its embellishments, and in the extent of its popularity, even when that "MOTHER OF HARLOTS" was in the zenith of *her* terrestrial glory; and yet, with all these "blessings," inherit as much of the superstition and priestcraft as are now entailed upon that once prosperous, flourishing, and predominant section of Christendom.

Sir, this is not mere declamation. No; it is founded in incontrovertible facts, *which every where stare us in the face*, and upon which comment is almost unnecessary. To disguise, misrepresent, and extenuate; or deny the palpable atrocity of those facts, is the only line of defence to which the Conference has, or can have recourse. But this very defence is an aggravation of its misdeeds. It is the very depth of hypocrisy,\* seeking to throw a mask of sanctity over the indefensible acts of a "deceitful heart."

Yours, &c.

THEOPHILUS.

(To be concluded in our next.)

\* In religion all *disguise* is hypocrisy; all *simulation*,—appearing to be what we are not,—and all *disimulation*,—appearing not to be what we really are, is flagrant hypocrisy in the sight of that God, who is of purer eyes than to behold even *disguised* iniquity without the most abhorrent detestation. He requirerh the *essence of truth* "in the inward parts" of his people; and hence his Holy Spirit, who sanctifies them, is emphatically styled "*the Spirit of Truth*."

THE ADDRESS OF THE REV. R. AITKEN TO THE PREACHERS,  
OFFICE BEARERS, AND MEMBERS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST SOCIETIES.

We stated in our last that an address under the above title had been advertised, from the pen of the Rev. R. Aitken. It has since been published, and now lies before us. Mr. Aitken has been known to the Methodist Connexion for some time as a zealous revivalist. Whether his conduct has been on all occasions the most judicious, we will not take upon ourselves to say; but, in our candid opinion, he is a pious man and a sincere and humble follower of his Lord and Master. He has on the present occasion met with the usual fate of self-appointed mediators, having been very unceremoniously repudiated by both parties. That very courteous mouthpiece of the Conference party in Liverpool, yclept the *Illuminator*,\* rejects with the utmost contempt his "tinkering" of the Constitution of Methodism as by law administered, it being, in the opinion of this worthy, "flat burglary" to deny that it is perfection itself. On the other hand, the *Christian Advocate* seems to consider Mr. Aitken a mere religious adventurer, and not at all fitted for the task he has taken upon himself. After the opinion we have expressed above, we need not say that our views of Mr. Aitken and his work differ from both. The principle of Mr. Aitken's plan of lay delegation and financial arrangements we have no great objections to. As to the precise detail of numbers, &c., it is a matter very easily settled, when once the principle is admitted. But our author shall speak for himself:

"If I rightly understand the matter, the members of what is called the Wesleyan Association aver, that the practice of Methodism is not what it formerly was; and that the existing laws of Methodism are not honestly adhered to and acted upon; and that in consequence of this departure from former usage and established law, they are aggrieved, and the work of God is retarded. Now it is not for me to say whether Methodism is, or is not, what it once was; much less shall I venture to determine what is and what is not Methodism. But this much I will say,—and I know that I am speaking the truth,—Methodism is not what it might be; Methodism is not what it ought to be."

He then proceeds to compare the rapid progress made by the Primitive Methodists, who have increased to 56,000 members in eighteen years, with the slow advance of the Old Connexion. Next he inquires "what is the cause of the present inefficiency in Methodism?" and rather singularly assumes that "the cause of the marvellous inefficiency of Methodism, and the cause of the present dissensions are two perfectly distinct things;" but as he advances no arguments in support of his position, we cannot judge of his reasons for this opinion. After exhortations to mutual charity and endeavours to meet each other, he next "proceeds to the consideration of what may be safely conceded by one party, without affecting the vitals of Methodism; and what ought to be received as the summum of every reasonable demand by the other."

"First then: *Is lay delegation a reasonable demand, and ought it to be conceded by the Conference?* I know very little of Conference business, or of the manner in which it is at present conducted; but I have my own idea of what ought to be its business, and of the great care, time, and pains that should be bestowed upon it; and I hesitate not to say, that it would be well if the temporal and spiritual business of Conference could be prevented from interfering with each other; for where so much is to be done, even under the best management, there is a great danger of one thing occupying the time which ought to be given to another. My opinion is, that laymen ought not to intermeddle with the spiritual business of the Conference; and that the preachers should very thankfully resign the management of the temporal concerns of the Connexion, as it would give them more time to attend to matters of higher importance."

"It is the business of Conference to examine the candidates for the ministry, and the young preachers who have been upon trial; to exert their combined wisdom in framing measures for the farther extension of the work of God at home and abroad; and to sit as a court of appeal in matters purely spiritual; and it ought to be the business of Conference to spend three, four, or six days, as their time would allow, in mourning for the sins of the people, and in crying to Almighty God to pour out his spirit upon themselves, upon the churches, and upon the whole world. Here is weighty work, and plenty of it. Here is work which must be well done, else the interests of religion will suffer. And here is work with which no layman has a right to interfere."

What Mr. Aitken can mean by stating that laymen have no right to interfere in crying to Almighty God to pour out his spirit on the churches, we are at a loss to know.

Next follows his plan of lay delegation or a lay Conference:

"Let seven persons of good report be sought out and appointed by the quarterly

\* So styled, we presume, because it does not illuminate, on the principle of "*lucus a non lucendo*."—ED.

meeting, to transact the temporal business of each circuit. Let these seven elect one of their number as the delegate of the lay district. Let the delegates assembled in their district meeting elect one of their number as their representative at the lay Conference, to be held annually at the same city or town, and at the same time, as the spiritual Conference: and to remedy the inconvenience of men being appointed to this lay Conference who are unacquainted with the routine of the business of the Connexion, let only one-half of the delegates retire annually; or, in other words, after the first year, when one-half of the members have gone out of office, let the election for subsequent delegates be obligatory for two years; and until the system be properly organized, let a committee of twenty preachers render the lay delegates their best assistance."

"The next question upon which there is a difference of opinion is this: *Who are the members of the quarterly meeting, and what is their business and power?* I should be sorry if this question were legislated upon under an impression that there is any thing in the relative situations of preachers and leaders that is calculated to bring them into collision, or that will warrant them to regard each other's privileges with suspicion."

"Let the law then affecting quarterly meetings be made for children of God, and not for children of the devil. Let there be liberty; and when that liberty is abused, it will be time enough to summon a convocation of laymen and ministers to enact a law for the suppression of the abuse. As at present, let the preacher be the chairman of the meeting; and let the leaders, local preachers, trustees, and stewards be the authorized members. Let the examination into character, diligence, faithfulness, and usefulness be the first business of the day; and if this be properly done, there will be little time and less disposition for vain and useless jangling. Let there be free discussion; but let the chairman have the option of bringing every matter to the vote, to prevent the time of the meeting from being taken up with unprofitable matter. Nevertheless, every vote of a majority shall have its full weight, as far as that may go."

The last sentence but one is rather ambiguous. If it means that a chairman may, if he pleases, refuse to put any motion to the vote, it is retaining one of the most objectionable parts of the old system. Even if it only means that the chairman may put the question whenever he pleases, to the vote, it is a power which may be wielded to the suppression of free discussion, and is, indeed, under any circumstances, quite unnecessary, as the meeting, if permitted to discuss a subject at all, is surely competent to judge how long it ought to be discussed.

"But, shall the sentence, *as well as the guilt, of an accused party be determined by a majority of the meeting?* If we had a criminal code, in which the penalty for specific crimes were clearly laid down, I should say, No: but let the power of mitigation rest with the chairman. But if such a code cannot be drawn up, although I am the last man in the world to advocate a laxity of discipline, I would say, There is so great a danger of injuring the usefulness of the preacher, and of inducing dissatisfaction, that, were I in the chairman's situation, I should be glad that the majority of the meeting should share the responsibility, lest I should be the means of rooting up the wheat with the tares.

"I have no fear of throwing open the quarterly meetings, if the two measures which I have recommended, or something like them, be passed into a law. I am convinced that there will be little left for any reasonable men to demand at the quarter day; and should it ever so happen that the leaders and local preachers, or a majority of them throughout the Connexion, should fall into such a spirit as to make demands that would be likely to prove detrimental to the cause of God, I have a remedy at hand. Let the members in every circuit in the Connexion choose a layman, and let the Conference appoint an equal number of preachers, and let the matter be discussed and decided upon in this general council or convocation. But I am persuaded this will never be necessary until vital godliness has left the society; and the society without vital godliness is not worthy of a thought."

"The solemn question now is,—*Can the Conference concede these two measures without the sacrifice of principle, and without injuring what is called the constitution of Methodism?* This word, if I mistake not, is a new term in Methodism; and it is difficult to say what is meant by it. It conveys to my mind a system of restrictions; a system of laws of man's making, based upon worldly-derived wisdom, that has little kindred with that Catholicism of spirit which is set forth in the gospel of Christ. Be this as it may, these measures cannot injuriously affect our class meetings, our band meetings, our prayer meetings, our penitent meetings, our love-feasts, our fast days, our watch-nights, our sacraments, and our public ordinances. They will not alter the terms of admission into society, our mode of calling preachers to the work of the ministry, our Christian discipline, as laid down in Mr. Wesley's rules. They cannot take away our hymn book, our bible, or prevent us from preaching a present, a free, and a full salvation. These are the essentials, the vitals, of Methodism: and so long as we use them well and work them well, they will never be taken from us. It is a charge of unfaithfulness against God; it is a libel upon Methodism; it is an insult to common sense, to imagine that a majority of leaders and local preachers could be found in any circuit, who would dare to attack, through the quarterly meeting, or by any other way, this blessed fabric of God's erecting."

The Reverend Gentleman now separately addresses himself to the preachers and the people. To the preachers, amongst other things, he says,—



"Preachers of the gospel of peace, the societies are distracted; thousands of your flock have already left your fold, and are as sheep without a shepherd. I do not say that you have driven them away; but I do say you can bring them back. And are your political rights to be weighed against the peace of the Connexion, and the salvation of thousands of souls, though you could prove to a demonstration that you only want your reasonable rights? Is it not your duty to set an example? Let sacrifice begin with you.

"Conference, the eyes of the Connexion, the eyes of the world, the eye of God, is upon you. The destiny of thousands who have joined the Association, and the decision of thousands more who have not joined it, are suspended to the result of your deliberations. May the God of your fathers overrule them for the peace of Jerusalem and the prosperity of Zion."

To the Association he next addresses a word of advice, and, with a degree of inconsistency, rather ludicrous than otherwise, attacks them in "good set terms" for asking for the very concessions he himself recommends.

"I love your souls, but I will oppose your measures. I pity your case, but I abhor your conduct. I will give my life to restore you to your privileges, but I will not injure my conscience by attempting to justify your procedure, or by palliating your crimes; and I will oppose you in your work of agitation to the utmost of my power."

What Mr. Aitken means by "opposing our measures" in the very pamphlet in which he is advocating them we confess passes our comprehension.

In conclusion, he says, "I cannot now enter upon the plans I would adopt to effectuate this reform." We wish he had, for no man ought to condemn the plans of others without offering something better of his own; particularly when he approves of their principles and objects. We have not space or leisure to add more; but we cannot but give Mr. Aitken the credit of disinterestedness in thus coming forward to mediate between the parties, as by this very act, if we are not very much mistaken, his connexion with the Conference is postponed "*sine die*."

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our attention has been directed to the following passage in the last number of the *Illuminator*, page 238:—"Whilst we contemplate the *circumstances* of the persons who are associated with Dr. Warren, we are forcibly reminded of the character of those who resorted to David at the Cave of Adullam, 'And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him,' &c. As to Dr. Warren's supporters in the Association being in *distress*, it is true enough that they have been plundered of their Methodistical privileges, but it is rather too much for the robbers to make their boast of this. Respecting the allusion to *debt*; we have hitherto avoided personalities, and we now call our readers to witness that this subject has been forced upon us; but as our opponents have mentioned it, we may as well speak our minds on the occasion. We believe every person at all taking an active part in the Association in Liverpool has hitherto paid his debts;—let many of the most active supporters of the preachers and vilifiers of the Association say as much if they can. The less they boast on this subject the better for their own credit.

**THE INTENDED NEW CHAPEL.**—In reference to a notice in the last *Illuminator*, stating that at the June quarterly meeting, 1834, eight resolutions were passed by the meeting, the second of which appoints ten gentlemen by name to be a committee for the "management of the fund to be forthwith formed for the purpose of building this chapel," we reply that at the following September quarterly meeting a number of *managers* or trustees were nominated by the *preacher* to supersede this committee, and that no vote whatever was taken on the subject. So much for "lying designedly." We understand that since the subject of the new chapel was first mooted by our correspondent *Oliver*, these *managers* have actually purchased land, we suppose as a pretext to prevent the money being returned to the subscribers. Further, as to when the chapel is to be erected, "this deponent saith not."

We are obliged to J. C. of Belfast, for the two first numbers of a spirited little work called the *Christian Liberator*,—the perusal of which has afforded us much pleasure. We regret that it is not in our power to accede to his proposal.

Want of room prevents us from inserting the Report of the Liverpool Committee of the Association, read at the last monthly meeting—A Minister of the New Connexion—Anniversary School Meeting—Mr Robert Eckett's second trial and suspension. Several other articles, prepared for publication, are unavoidably postponed. We have also been under the necessity of omitting our usual "Sayings and Doings," and other acknowledgments to correspondents.

No. 21 will be published on Wednesday, the 12th of August.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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## THE CONFERENCE AND THE DELEGATES.

The Conference have refused to recognise or treat with the Delegates! Rejecting the advice of their best friends, and disregarding the addresses, petitions, and remonstrances of an indulgent, confiding, and much-injured people, with an insatiation which will scarcely be credited in after-times, the venerable fathers and brethren assembled at Sheffield have tamely suffered themselves to be led by the ruling party, and in order to establish despotic, unscriptural, and irresponsible power, have vainly, foolishly, and wickedly interrupted the nutriment even when they ought to have assisted the growth of Christianity! But a wise and good Providence will overrule their unrighteous decision; and religious liberty, at no distant period, will triumph over injustice, bigotry, and intolerance. Already we learn from all parts of the kingdom, that the people, duly considering that if this opportunity be lost it will be in vain to seek redress of grievances hereafter, are "up and doing," and the day of retribution is at hand. Had even a small minority supported Dr. Warren, and Messrs. Bromley, Emmett, and Averill, the cause of the people might have been eventually lost through overweening confidence in their exertions; the dawn of a brighter day, the faint appearance of liberality at length pervading their counsels might have lulled the people to repose, and thrown them off their guard; but the determined purpose is now unmasked, the veil is withdrawn, and the tyranny of a despotic faction stands revealed in all its native deformity.

There being nothing to hope from the justice of Conference, so long as it is governed by the dominant party, it is certain that in no other way but by means of united, simultaneous, and active exertions, under the blessing of God, can the people regain their spiritual rights and independence; and for this holy warfare ample provision has been made by the delegates, who have nobly done their duty. It is somewhat remarkable that they had satisfactorily completed arrangements for the ensuing year, and were about to pass the final resolution, when the tardy answer of Conference was received.

When the people came and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, "Thy father made our yoke grievous; now, therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee,"—that misguided king forsook the counsel of the old men, and answered the people roughly, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people, for the cause was from the Lord. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents,

O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents." Now one might really suppose that the Conference had taken Rehoboam for their model, and followed his example. The people complained that their yoke was grievous by reason of the arbitrary and illegal acts of the superintendents; and, instead of patiently hearing their complaints with a view to redress their grievances, the Conference, in a long and furious epistle, signed by the President, but evidently written by one who shall be nameless, and couched in the most insulting language, reply, that they will make their yoke heavier by imposing additional restraints to guard "the pastoral office," slyly hinting, however, that the people may return on condition of giving their money without inquiry, and renouncing the absurd privilege of thinking for themselves. Not content with thus outraging the feelings of the flock that fed them, and imputing the worst of motives to the Wesleyan Methodist Association, they put honour upon every superintendent, not excepting Messrs. Tabraham, Joshua Marsden, Samuel Jackson, and George Marsden. Mr. Tabraham has an appointment to preach during the sittings of Conference, and Mr. Joshua Marsden has been made a Conference officer, and raised to a platform seat!! "To your tents," then, "to your tents, O Israel!"

But it seems the President, agreeably to the enlightened rules of Methodism *as it is*, was not allowed to give a direct and honest answer to the plain question, put by the delegates, to which we have just adverted, (and on which we shall comment by and bye more at large,) as appears from the following dialogue which took place, after the customary friendly salutations, between Mr. Reece and one of the Liverpool delegates with whom he had been many years intimately acquainted:—

DELEGATE.—I very much fear, Mr. Reece, from the manner in which our communications are received, that there is no hope of a reconciliation. I am afraid you are about to cast us off.

PRESIDENT.—No, no; if you have not cast yourselves off, you will not be cast off.

DELEGATE.—I have not cast myself off, and I do not intend to be cast off; but why cannot we have an answer?

PRESIDENT.—Consider what important business we have to transact.

DELEGATE.—But would it not be doing right to meet us at once, or plainly tell us you will not receive us? Why keep us here from day to day, from our homes, and from our business? You must be aware that, in not giving us a decisive answer at once on the subject, you are putting us to very great inconvenience. I cannot see that you are disposed to meet us at all.

PRESIDENT.—Yes, we are disposed to meet you, but you do not consider the extraordinary press of business at this Conference, quite out of the usual way. Look at the long case of Dr. Warren, that of Mr. Emmett, and that of Mr. Averill.

DELEGATE.—Yes, Sir; but look at the time which has elapsed since you received our first note, on Friday morning, and yet we have had no answer from you, as to whether you will meet us at all or not. I really cannot gather from any of your communications what are your real intentions. I admit you have had an extraordinary press of business, but I submit that the best way to transact it would be to appoint a committee to meet us and attend to our respective addresses. This might surely be done without interrupting the regular business of Conference.

PRESIDENT.—We have already chosen a committee, and it is now considering your case; a letter for you is in preparation, and you will receive it this afternoon.

DELEGATE.—We have received your letter.

PRESIDENT.—Then it is an answer to your reply to it which is getting ready.

DELEGATE.—We have not sent our reply yet.

PRESIDENT.—Well; the answer is getting ready.

DELEGATE.—How can that be until you know what to reply to?

PRESIDENT.—Why, I do not know exactly; it would be impossible for me to attend to every thing: I must attend to the business of Conference. You may depend upon it, I will do all I can to expedite your case; but the regular and defined business of Conference must be attended to in the first place.

DELEGATE.—Well; if your views are to bring about a reconciliation, and restore peace and harmony to the Connexion, I shall greatly rejoice.

PRESIDENT.—We have an important principle in Methodism committed to our care, which we are called upon to preserve and transmit to our children unimpaired, namely, that the life and spirit of Christianity may be kept among us to the latest generation.

DELEGATE.—Without that principle I would not give a rush for Methodism; it would be worth nothing at all without it. In that way I received Methodism from my forefathers, and I am determined so to hand it down to my children if it lay in my power.

The President then cordially shook hands with the Delegate, and said, I am glad of that,—I am glad of that, brother.

“Promising is the very air o’ the time;” but it will be seen in the sequel that no intention existed to treat with the Association in the sense understood and expressed in a straight-forward manner by the Liverpool delegate; and the most charitable construction we can put upon the conduct of the president is, that he good-naturedly ventured to promise without first consulting his master.

Before we proceed with our remarks, we beg the reader’s attention to the following abridgment from the *Christian Advocate*.

#### THE NINETY-SECOND ANNUAL WESLEYAN-METHODIST CONFERENCE, HELD IN SHEFFIELD, 1835.

Amongst other preparatory meetings was one held on Friday, July 24, consisting of the ex-President, Dr. Bunting, a few of his immediate followers, and a number of “principal friends,” whom Mr. Taylor took upon himself to convene for purposes, as he said, of “counsel and advice;” but whom the *Leeds Mercury* more correctly alleged to have been called together for the purpose of “giving the Conference every support.” There were present 100 laymen and twenty-five preachers. All the laymen who spoke affirmed that the people were satisfied with Methodism as it is. Dr. Bunting proposed to make the following concessions:—

1. To define quarterly meetings,—to be composed of representatives from leaders’ meetings, stewards, trustees, &c.
2. Quarterly meetings to have a right, independent of the superintendent, to appoint circuit meetings, for the discussion of *circuit* matters.
3. Circuits to elect a representative to the district meetings, and district meetings to send a representative to Conference, to manage the funds, exclusive of those belonging to the preachers.
4. Leaders’ meetings to find the fact of a member’s guilt; the superintendent to adjudge the penalty, but not to give sentence until a week has elapsed; in the meantime, to consult his colleagues, and the stewards, and “principal friends.”

*Wednesday, July 29.*

The sittings of the Conference commenced, according to appointment, on Wednesday, July 29, in Carver-street chapel. At a quarter before six, Dr. Warren arrived in the carriage of Mr. Dixon, his worthy host. Not more than two or three of the preachers moved to him, or otherwise noticed him. He took his usual place.

The Conference was opened by the President, Mr. Joseph Taylor, giving out a hymn, and some one else prayed.

The preachers then took their seats according to seniority. On reading over the names of the Hundred, it was found that nine members of that mystical body had died since it was last completed, and their places were supplied.

When they were about to proceed to the election of Mr. Taylor’s successor, a paper, signed by the chief men upon the platform, was handed to him, which proved to contain an inquiry whether Dr. Warren, seeing that he was under suspension, was entitled to vote and act. Hearing this, the Doctor rose, and asked the Chairman, whether, according to law, he could entertain that question. Dr. Bunting (who was evidently much annoyed by the presence of Dr. Warren)



and the whole Conference were quite confounded by this interrogatory ; and, after a pause of considerable length, Dr. Bunting rose and said that they had better not push the question any further ! Dr. Warren then gave his vote with the rest.

On taking the ballot for President, it appeared that Dr. Bunting's nominee was elected by a considerable majority. The votes were as follow :—

1 Atherton,	2 Lessey,	63 Stanley,
2 Waddy, sen.	3 Entwistle, sen.	187 Reece.

Mr. Reece was, of course, appointed President, and returned thanks in a suitable speech. Mr. Robert Newton was then elected Secretary.

The number of preachers deceased during the past year was ascertained to be thirty.

On some preacher remarking that Dr. Warren was still present, Dr. Bunting, whose eye was fixed upon that of his brother Doctor, said, "Yes, Dr. Warren has not that fine sense,"—(evidently intending to insinuate sense of honour :) to which Dr. Warren, in a loud voice, replied, "No ; not a bit of it !" In fact, Dr. Warren must be possessed of an undaunted courage to bear up beneath all the cowardly and unprincipled attempts to molest and discourage him. Thus Jabez and his tools were again foiled ; and it was upon the heels of this second fruitless attempt to exclude the obnoxious individual that they sang and prayed.

*Thursday Morning, Six o'clock.*

The Minutes of the Manchester Special District Meeting having been read, and Dr. Warren having appealed against the decision of that meeting, a question was raised as to his right to make such an appeal. It was argued that Dr. Warren had forfeited the right of appeal,—1st. Because he had not given any notice of appeal, as is usual in such cases ; 2d. Because he had appealed in the interim to the law of the land, and to the public at large ; 3d. Because his conduct subsequently to his suspension had been disorderly and agitating, and consequently unmethodical. Against the *first* ground of objection, namely, his not having given formal notice of his intention to appeal, Dr. Warren argued that he knew of no law which made it essential to such an appeal that a regular notice should be sent. He assumed that he had a right to go at once to the Conference and make his appeal. As to his application to the Court of Chancery, the reasons of that were to be found in his having been excluded from his pulpits, contrary to law and to Methodism. As to his subsequent appeal to the people, he contended that, as the question had been decided against him, the people had a right, by petitioning Conference, to obtain, if possible, such a version of the rules as might preserve them in future from all such painful occurrences. A memorandum, however, was drawn up, stating that if Dr. Warren was willing to go into the whole case, he might be allowed, *as a special favour*, to make such an appeal. The Minutes of the Manchester Special District Meeting were then read, and it was most emphatically stated that *contumacy* was that for which the brethren suspended him, and that no other alternative was left them. Dr. Warren then observed, that contumacy was the only real charge which appeared against him. He stated that as the other charges which had been preferred had not been gone into, and as no record, either of true or of false, appeared upon them, he was not liable to reply to the charges themselves. He said further, that as he had received no charges for any thing which had occurred subsequent to his suspension by the District Meeting, he had no right to put himself on his defence for any thing which had occurred subsequently ; this he showed was according to their own law, which law he then quoted from the *Digest*, second edition, page 67, as follows :—

"Whenever the Chairman has received any complaint against a preacher, either from the preachers or the people, he shall send an exact account of the complaint in writing to the person accused, with the name of the accuser or accusers."

It had not been so done, Dr. Warren continued, in reference to him ; he had received no such notice. The only thing, therefore, against which he could, correctly, be called upon to defend himself was the charge of contumacy. Nevertheless he would not object to answer to any thing which might be adduced to his charge.

Mr. GRINDROP then read over nearly the whole of a very bitter pamphlet which had been got up, printed, and published by the preachers of the Manchester district ; and, after that, certain resolutions which the preachers had passed among themselves at other meetings, expressive of their abhorrence of the conduct of Dr. Warren, and their separate conclusions upon that conduct. These were the *charges*, so called, which Dr. Warren had to meet, with all their acerbities, contradictions, and malignity. No copies, even of these, had, it seems, been sent to him, that he might prepare an answer to them, and so he was brought to trial.

The President then called upon Dr. Warren to make his defence.

Dr. Warren rose amidst profound silence. He delivered himself with great calmness and self-possession, referring occasionally to a few scanty notes in pencil, though the substance of his address was evidently purely extempore. He had sat, he said, with perfect composure, to listen to the accumulated charges of all kinds and descriptions which had been narrated, exaggerated, distorted, falsified, and aggravated, with all the bitterness which angry controversy could possibly furnish, as well as to those other written documents, which had been just read in his hearing for the first time. He was forcibly reminded, he said, of the saying of Mr. Wesley, repeated in reference to many vile and calumniating things which were said of that good man by his opponents, "Throw dirt enough, and some will stick." Were he before an assembly where he was unknown, or only before the junior members of that Conference, what a hideous character must he appear in their eyes! He must surely seem one of the most odious men in existence. He had, however, the privilege of speaking before the fathers of the body, with whom he had been acquainted for thirty or forty years; and he was glad to know that it was in their recollection, that for the preceding thirty-three years, during which he had been in the ministry, he had, through the great goodness of God, been enabled so to conduct himself that no charge had ever been brought against him upon any occasion whatever. During that period he had devoted all his energies, of mind and of body, to the promotion of the cause of Methodism. Hence he had been not a little struck at the tone and manner in which some of the brethren had expressed themselves during the present sitting of Conference, as if some grievous enemy of the Connexion and of the brethren were in the assembly. They had vehemently expressed their attachment to Methodism. One brother especially, a brother on his left hand, (Mr. M'Kittrick, we believe, who had just been elected one of the Hundred,) had declared his determination to abide by Methodism, and to sink or swim with it. In such sentiments he (Dr. Warren) would give place to none. He also truly loved Methodism; but then it was not exactly Methodism *as it is*, but as it was when he entered the body, and as it was till within the few last years. As to his love for genuine Methodism, he would not give place even to the President himself, who had so warmly expressed himself in his opening speech that morning. He (the President) had dwelt with pleasure on the largeness and goodness of the Old Ship, which had conveyed multitudes safe to the celestial shore, and which, at present, had very few less than a million souls on board; expressing his confidence that she would survive all the storms she might yet encounter, all the dangers to which she might be exposed. He (Dr. Warren) believed, with the President, that *Methodism* would last as long as the world; but whether under its present form and government it would so last, was quite another question. He must tell the President that sometimes a captain of a ship, whether he was aware of it or not, while he was asleep,—and captains must sometimes sleep,—as he could not be always on the watch,—officers had been known to inflict many and grievous wrongs on the crew. Nay, it was not an unheard-of thing, that even his *chief-mate* (fixing his eyes on Dr. Bunting) had issued orders by which some of his subalterns, as well as many others of the crew, had been thrown overboard and drowned, and that for alleged faults, and where there was no law to justify the act. And yet such conduct had been attempted to be justified on the plea of *usage*. If such practices could be allowed to go on, the Ship of Methodism, as at present constituted, was in imminent peril: none need wonder if mutinies had already arisen, or be surprised if fresh mutinies, if incalculable mischief, should arise in future. He had, it was true, listened to several expressions which had encouraged his hope of a more judicious administration: he was glad to hear some words fall from the lips of Dr. Bunting, some of which he had noted down: they were the following:—*Usage, RIGHT, LAW, the NEW TESTAMENT*. The last three words were such, as, if adhered to in practice, would soon restore peace and good government. But, while he uttered that sentiment, his mind was afflicted with a most oppressive thought: indeed, such had been its force that he had hesitated for some time whether or not he should attempt any formal defence. That superincumbent weight seemed to render utterly hopeless any attempt to influence the minds of the great majority of the brethren present. The reason to which he referred was that not fewer than EIGHT HUNDRED AND FORTY brethren, among whom he was obliged to number almost all the influential preachers of the body, had, in the most solemn and public manner, pledged and committed themselves on one side of the question, before they had assembled to decide on the case with which he was identified—to hear and determine upon that only appeal left him for an impartial judgment! The document to which he alluded was entitled the "General Declaration of the Methodist Preachers,"

stitched up with the Magazine for January, 1835, a copy of which he held up to the view of the Conference. In that memorable declaration it was said, among other things :—"We thus publicly avow our steadfast adherence to the great principles of Methodism *as at present constituted*, and subscribe our names to this Declaration!" Dr. Warren then said, that, under these almost hopeless circumstances, he had, however, determined to utter his defence in the hearing of his brethren. Rightly to understand what led to his suspension for contumacy, it would be necessary, he observed, to look to the constitution of the district meeting which was to try him for the publication of his pamphlet on the subject of the Theological Institution. The leading members of that meeting were persons deeply implicated in the charges contained in that pamphlet; or, by their subsequent conduct towards him, rendered incompetent to decide on his case. To prove this, the Doctor went into particulars as to the composition of that meeting, and the case of Mr. Bromley, whose expulsion from the district meeting was the occasion of Dr. Warren's declaring that he would not stand a trial before that meeting if the only disinterested friend he had present was forced to retire under such circumstances. As to the subject of contumacy, the only legitimate charge on record against him, he maintained that the district meeting proceeded to his suspension contrary to the law of the Connexion, both as to the letter and as to the spirit. The only law which referred to suspension for contumacy was to be found in the Plan of Pacification. See *Digest*, page 143 :—"If any preacher refuse to submit to *the above mode of trial, in any of the cases mentioned above*, he shall be considered as suspended till the next Conference." Now, he (Dr. Warren) never did refuse to submit to *the above mode of trial*, which was in a district called by the trustees, leaders, and local preachers, and composed of them and the preachers united; nor could the charges brought against him be under any of the cases "*mentioned above*," which were immorality, heterodoxy, incompetency, or breaches of the rules concerning the administration of the sacrament. He maintained, therefore, that the district meeting had no authority to suspend him on that law, nor any other of which he knew. [The stillness which prevailed at this moment was profound.] In addition to that, he (Dr. Warren) maintained that there was no law in the New Testament, to which Dr. Bunting had referred, which justified his brethren in attempting to silence him from preaching that gospel which the Lord Jesus Christ had charged him to preach, and which right had not been forfeited by any conduct specified in their own laws.

The Conference then adjourned.

At nine o'clock Dr. WARREN resumed his defence, by remarking upon the statement of the preachers of the Manchester District, which had been put into his hand by Mr. Grindrod, *after he had entered on his defence!* Some things stated in that pamphlet, which were thought to produce a strong impression on the minds of his brethren, he would undertake to reply to. The first was the way in which the Manchester Quarterly Meeting was called: it was said to have been called a week earlier than usual, in order to anticipate the meeting of the Special District. But the fact was, that some of the official men of the circuit, believing that the Special District Meeting was designed to steal a march upon them, determined to hold their meeting first. They (the Circuit Stewards, and not Dr. Warren) sent round to the friends to inform them of their purpose, and asked Dr. Warren for his approval. When he found that the requisition for that meeting was signed by nearly all the official men of the circuit, he gave his consent, and the meeting was held accordingly. Then he had been charged with breaking up the Juvenile Missionary Association, and also with recommending the stoppage of supplies. He was not the occasion of the proposal; but when he returned from London, he found that some of the members of that association had got to know that £700 was to be annually diverted from the funds of the Missionary Society to assist in supporting the Theological Institution, and most of the subscribers determined no longer to subscribe to it. They asked him (Dr. Warren) what they should do. He told them to go back and entreat the subscribers by all means to continue their subscriptions; but that, if they would not continue on any other grounds, the money might remain in the hands of the treasurer till a communication was made with the officers of the society in London. The subscribers, however, would not give their money. The friends then thought, that, rather than lose the subscribers for ever, it might be well to stop the supplies, in order to induce a more speedy answer. The fact was, that the subscribers themselves, and not he (Dr. Warren) originated the idea of withholding the supplies. Dr. Warren next adverted to his suspension, and to the ejection from the pulpits of his circuit, which introduced the origin of the formation

of the Association. The great mass of the people in the circuit were so offended and grieved at the conduct of the district meeting, that they resolved not to accept of Mr. Newton as their superintendent; they maintained that he (Dr. Warren) was their only lawful superintendent, and that they would receive no other. The question therefore was, whether that large mass of people should be lost to the society, and go into other denominations, or whether he should use his influence to keep them together, though they would not receive Mr. Newton. An accommodation was attempted to be made. A number of leaders were deputed to call on Mr. Newton, whom he would not officially receive, but indirectly through Mr. J. Marsden. The object was to induce Mr. Newton to forego his claim to preside in the leaders' meetings, and to allow him (Dr. Warren) to do so, with a view to prevent the breaking up of the leaders' meetings at Oldham-street Chapel. Had that proposition been agreed to, some arrangement might probably have been made till the next Conference. That refusal by Mr. Newton compelled them to retire to Tibbs-street, where they met with him (Dr. Warren) and conducted their business. That was the very point on which the Association had its origin: its object was to prevent a large society from being dissipated and scattered. The leaders and members who thus adhered were considered by the preachers as having seceded from the Society, and were treated as seceders. They foresaw that they were to be cut off by the professed exercise of discipline, and therefore they called a meeting of the officers of the four circuits of Manchester to unite, thinking that it would make the preachers pause before they determined to cut off such a body. Then the Liverpool people said, "We cannot stand by, and see Manchester thus cut off: we will unite with them, and thus preserve ourselves from separation from the body, labouring at the same time to bring the matter to an amicable adjustment." That, as far as he knew any thing of the character of the Association, was the spirit, design, and conduct of the whole of its members, namely, to prevent their separation from the Society; to preserve them in the fold with the slightest possible partition between them, that at the ensuing Conference an amicable arrangement might be made, and they might be saved to the body of the Methodists. Dr. Warren then proceeded to pounce down upon the irregularities of the Conference itself. He reminded them, as they were contending so much for authority and rule, that, in the case of the Theological Institution, they, the Conference preachers, had, on their own authority, called together a great number of gentlemen to meet with them at Great Queen-street Chapel, in London, on the 26th of July, 1834. That meeting was, to all intents and purposes, irregular and unconstitutional; and he had denounced it as such when present. It had the obvious tendency to overrule the judgment of the original Committee, to overawe the judgment of Conference itself, as none but friends to the proposed Institution were invited. Having commented further on that proceeding, the Doctor went on to show that the people had many causes to justify their resorting to extraordinary measures, on the ground that the regular sources of remonstrance were closed against them. Notwithstanding that the formation of the Institution was effected contrary to the law, which required that twelve months should intervene between the proposal and the adoption, that Institution, with a host of new laws, was founded. The Doctor here read the law, as stated in the *Digest*, page 150. Then, when the people met together on the quarter-days, to express their sentiments as to the existence of the Theological Institution, they were told by the superintendent that they could not be allowed to express their opinions upon such subjects; and when they pressed their right, the preacher refused to propose their resolutions, or abruptly left the chair. How, then, could the people express any opinion to the Conference, but of their own accord? But, when they resorted to that only alternative, those very meetings were declared to constitute all who attended them violators of the constitution, and they were expelled, without having the question decided by a majority at a leaders' meeting. Under such circumstances, how could the people by any possibility reach the ear of the Conference? The only lawful avenues for doing so were cut off by the officers of the Conference; and, when they endeavoured to avail themselves of other means, they were for that reason cut off from the Society. Then, as to the leaders' meetings, it was affirmed that, on the mere finding that persons had attended meetings of the description to which he referred, scores and hundreds had been so expelled, while the Rules, the editions of 1798 and of 1800, positively showed that the people were right, and that the former practice, wherever adopted, was a violation of the rule which stated that no officer or private member should be expelled "but by a majority at a leaders' meeting." Dr. Warren then adverted to an objection made to his procedure, that whereas in the early part of the con-



flict he had said that he contended for nothing new in Methodism, he had subsequently made and recommended the greatest infractions on the rules. To that charge he answered, briefly, that in three large editions of his Remarks upon the Theological Institution, he had stated his sincere belief and hope that nothing new in Methodism was required for its renovation; and it was not till after that period that the conduct of the approved agents of the Conference, and superintendents of circuits, made it manifest that the evil was much deeper than he had before any conception of. It did then appear that something new was necessary, and, in a *fourth* edition, he stated, in a note, that the evils complained of *without*, left no room to hope for a cure from *within*. That note, the Doctor read with much emphasis, to the evident chagrin of many of the preachers. He then proceeded to remark that the heavy and bitter complaints brought against him and the Association for agitating and disturbing the peace of many most important societies in the kingdom, admitted of an obvious defence. In an early part of the controversy, many of the most accredited official agents of the Conference had published numerous pamphlets, vilifying him and the members whom they had expelled from the Society. *By means of their Book Room they had distributed tracts and pamphlets without end, throughout the whole kingdom, not only among their own members, but among people generally.* In those pamphlets their characters were vilely traduced, and they were made to suffer under inflictions the most cruel. No other means remained in vindication of their characters than to follow, as far as they could, those foul calumnies and slanders. That was the ground on which the Association was formed, and on which it had conducted itself: to defend themselves from the slanders of the agents of Conference, to petition the approaching Conference to heal the wounds which had been made, and to secure correct rules, together with a faithful administration of them. But besides the pamphlets written in that way, other publications had been put into requisition. Here he mentioned a preacher whom he was glad to see present, the editor of the *Methodist Magazine*, who, in an article called a *Christian Retrospect*, had allowed slander and calumny to be heaped on members of the Association, and circulated through the whole world. In addition to that magazine, a newspaper had been published, under the sanction of the Conference, called the *Watchman*, in which the same course was pursued. While these instruments of mischief were in constant operation, the members of the Association found it necessary to defend themselves from the slanders thus propagated. Dr. Warren then adverted to the eagerness manifested by some of the preachers to cut off from the societies all who had ventured to differ in opinion from them, and quoted with much feeling an extract from an address in the Minutes of Conference of 1793:—"O brethren, *we hate putting away*, especially those who are members of the mystical body of Christ, and our dearly beloved brethren; and whose only error, where they do err, is that of the judgment, and not of the heart. And can we suffer these to forsake their faithful pastors, and possibly to run into the jaws of some ravening wolf, when the point in contest must be allowed by all to be *unessential* to salvation."

It was moved that the minutes of the Manchester special district meeting be confirmed.

Mr. BEAUMONT delivered an animated speech, in which he objected to the constitution of the special district meeting, especially in appointing Mr. J. Crowther as its secretary, and in excluding Mr. Bromley.

Mr. BROMLEY spoke against the motion, and in vindication of Dr. Warren, whom he characterized as a great and good man.

After some explanation and discussion, the motion was put, and passed unanimously, with the single exception of Mr. Bromley.

Mr. GAULTER then moved that Dr. Warren be forthwith expelled, which was seconded, and supported by Mr. Galland.

Mr. BROMLEY moved, as an amendment, that Dr. Warren be not expelled. The motion, however, was not seconded.

A general clamour ensued for his expulsion; many of the preachers uttering vindictive and bitter expressions. Mr. Barnard Slater expressed his detestation of the Doctor and his proceedings, and said that if he were not expelled, both himself and two or three hundred members on his circuit would leave the Connexion. Mr. W. M. Bunting also declared that he would leave the Connexion if Dr. Warren were not expelled.

Dr. BUNTING then read a string of resolutions in unison with the motion for expulsion, and begged that the brethren would give them their most serious consideration previous to their assembling the following morning.

*Saturday Morning, Six o'clock.*

Mr. T. ROWLAND seconded Mr. Bromley's motion for retaining Dr. Warren.

The whole of this sitting was occupied in discussing the original resolution, which was carried unanimously, with the single exception of Mr. Rowland, the preachers standing up in approbation of the expulsion. Subsequently Mr. Rowland was required to apologize for having seconded Mr. Bromley's motion! He accounted for his vote on the ground, that, though Dr. Warren had transgressed, yet that the Conference ought not to cut him off, but continue him at least for one year.

*Monday Morning, August 3.*

Dr. WARREN attended to receive the sentence of Conference: he was firm and unmoved during the brief address of the President to his old colleague in the ministry—the parties having been stationed together at Rochester immediately before the Rev. R. Reece came to Sheffield, three years since. The President having discharged his painful office, by reading the sentence of expulsion, Dr. Warren got upon the seat of the pew in which he was standing, and, in energetic terms, protested against the sentence, as turning him out of the inheritance of his fathers; intimating, at the same time, that he should consider it due to himself to take the only course open to him for the recovery of his position. Conference and he would meet again, perhaps under more favourable circumstances. The Rev. Doctor then withdrew.

On Tuesday the Rev. Messrs. Emmett and Averill were expelled. The charge against the former was his connexion with the Association; and against Mr. Averill, insubordination in declining to support his superintendent. The greater part of Wednesday and Thursday was spent in the trial of the Rev. Mr. Bromley, against whom his connexion with Dr. Warren, and his refusal to attend the Missionary meeting, according to his instructions, were objected. He spoke eight hours in defence in a most eloquent manner, managed his case with consummate skill, and replied very ably to the questions and remarks with which he was pressed. The trial ended in an amicable adjustment. On Friday the Conference was occupied with the case of Mr. Roe, of Dudley. He was censured, and declared incapable of acting as a superintendent for the present. Mr. Stones, of Stourbridge, was also admonished; his offence was the having allowed a memorial to Conference to be passed at a meeting at which he presided.

#### ADJOURNED MEETING OF WESLEYAN METHODIST DELEGATES, AT SHEFFIELD.

On Friday, July 31, nearly one hundred Delegates, from circuits in various parts of the kingdom, assembled in Surrey-street Chapel. After some preliminary arrangements, it was considered desirable to communicate with the Conference as early as possible, on the nature of the business which had assembled them together. A letter was immediately forwarded to the President, requesting that the Conference would appoint some hour, on the following day, to receive an address from the Delegates. The President replied, that he would lay the letter before the Conference at the earliest opportunity, and take their instructions respecting it; but that it was probable that, for some time, they would be engaged in business which was of great importance, and would admit of no interruption. This being deemed unsatisfactory, a second application was addressed to the President, who immediately replied in a style somewhat supercilious, to say the least of it, that he was "directed to inform Mr. Cookman that, according to custom, any communication intended for the Conference might be sent to the President, either by post, or by a special messenger; and he would take the most suitable opportunity for obtaining the instructions of his brethren on the subject."—The Delegates then resolved that the Address, of which the following is a copy, should be presented without delay to the President by Messrs. Livesey, Hesketh, and Parker.

*"Carver-street Chapel, Aug. 1, 1835.*

AN ADDRESS

*"To the Methodist Conference assembled in Sheffield, from a numerous Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates.*

"Dear Brethren:—The serious and alarming disturbance which at present prevails throughout a considerable part of the Wesleyan Connexion forms a reason sufficient to justify the unusual application which we thus make to you.

"We deplore the evils of disunion and division which have already accom-

panied that disturbance, and anticipate with the most powerful feelings still greater evils as likely to occur unless efficient measures be immediately adopted to arrest the progress of disorganization. We feel ourselves united to the system of Methodism by the strong tie of grateful affection. Many of us have been connected with it from our earliest years. Ye are our witnesses that we have cheerfully, according to our ability, in our several spheres, endeavoured to diffuse its influence and promote its objects, and in so doing have incurred heavy pecuniary responsibilities. In its communion we still wish to labour—to live and to die; and our heart's desire and prayer to God is that Methodism, strictly conformed to the principles contained in his holy Word, may bless our children and children's children to the end of time. We might on these and on other grounds assert a personal claim to the attention we solicit; but when we inform you that we have been commissioned to hold communication with you by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of members of societies over which you have been placed, we feel assured that you will give the most serious regard to our requests. Brethren, it is union for which we are contending, and not division,—union on a solid and scriptural foundation, and we confidently hope that you will co-operate with us in stilling the agitation which is so injurious to the character and destructive to the success of our community. In the fear of the Lord we submit to you our wishes. It is for you to pour oil on the troubled waters. You have the power to prolong and increase the discord and strife now so unhappily prevailing among us, and you have also the power under God to render our Connexion prosperous and happy. Permit us to state,—and the statement is not made in anger, but in sorrow,—that in our opinion the causes of the grievances of which complaint is at present so loudly and so generally made, is the assumption on your part of an authority which, both as to its nature and extent, is inconsistent with the brotherly relation which ought to subsist among us. It is on this account that we so anxiously look to you for the removal of those grievances. We request you to allow us personally to communicate with you on this subject, either by admitting us into your Conference, or by appointing some of your number who may meet with us, or in any other equitable mode which may be more convenient to you.

“We are prepared, respectfully and affectionately, to receive any suggestions towards the establishment of peace which you may deem proper to make to us in the course of such communication, as we are also ready clearly and fully to state what we believe will most conduce to the welfare of Methodism at the present crisis.”

To this mild, conciliating, and very respectful Address, the President returned the following cold and indifferent answer; the reader will form his own opinion of the motives which dictated it:—

*Carver-street Chapel, August 3, 1835.*

SIR,—I am directed to inform you that the first days of this week, according to custom, must necessarily be occupied in the examination of the young men who are to be admitted into full connexion, preparatory to the public services, which have been announced and cannot be postponed.

This, and other defined and urgent business will take up the whole time of the Conference for at least a few days.

You shall hear from me again at the earliest opportunity.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Mr. G. Cookman.

R. REECE.

The reader will admire the Christian spirit which breathes through the following:—

*Surrey-street Chapel, Sheffield, August 4, 1835.*

REV. SIR,—We are directed by the Delegates to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, in reply to their address requesting an interview with the Conference, in which you state that “urgent business will take up the whole time of the Conference for at least a few days,” and to express their deep concern at such announcement.

The Delegates have left their homes and business at the urgent solicitations of many thousand members of Society, for the purpose of devising, if possible, in conjunction with the Conference, measures for putting an end to the alarming state of agitation and division, now unhappily so prevalent throughout the Connexion.

Such a declaration, however, as that contained in your letter, will, if carried into effect, place it totally out of their power to assist in so desirable an object; the nature of their various engagements, as the Conference will readily conceive,

requiring them to return to their respective homes before the period mentioned by you.

The Delegates beg solemnly to press upon the Conference the absolute necessity of their availing themselves of the opportunity now afforded to terminate strife and disunion in the Connexion, and they urge the deep and awful responsibility which must inevitably attach to a refusal,—for such, under the circumstances, they cannot but regard the delay to accede to so reasonable and important a request.

In the hope that the Conference will reconsider the subject, and grant the required interview during some part of to-day at the latest, to hear the statements of the Delegates, they will anxiously wait till twelve o'clock a communication to that effect.

Signed on behalf of the meeting, { GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman,  
R. RALPH GRINDROD, Secretary.

The policy of Conference is developed in the following letter, and very ably exposed by the Delegates in their reply :—

*Curver-street, Sheffield, August 4, 1835.*

The note of Mr. Cookman and Mr. Grindrod, dated August 4, has been received by the President. The regular and absolutely necessary business of the Conference, they must be aware, is at least as urgent and important as any of those extraordinary proceedings to which the President is requested to call the immediate attention of that body. The general order of the business of the Conference has for many years been defined and established by rule; and some parts of it are indispensably preparatory, as was stated in a former note, to those religious services which have been publicly announced, both from the pulpit and the press, for this evening and to-morrow evening, and which it is impossible to postpone.

The President has already taken measures for bringing the subject of the address which bears the signatures of Mr. Cookman and Mr. Grindrod before the Conference, at the earliest proper opportunity, and he hopes that it may be in his power to return an answer to their application on or before Thursday morning, at twelve o'clock. The President will be sorry if this delay should subject the gentlemen concerned to any material inconvenience; but they must be sensible; on reflection, that the proper and usual business of a public assembly, like the Conference, whose sittings are legally limited to a definite period, which they have no power to alter or enlarge, cannot, and ought not, to be altogether subjected to the wishes of other parties, with whom no previous appointment had been, or could have been, made.

R. REECE, President.

*To Mr. G. Cookman and Mr. R. Grindrod.*

*Surrey-street Chapel, August 4, 1835.*

REV. SIR,—The Wesleyan Delegates, now assembled in Surrey-street Chapel, cannot but lament that you should have deemed it necessary to transmit to them the letter which they this morning received. They beg to state that it was not in reference to any previous appointment which had been made that they addressed themselves to you, but with reference to the appointment of some mode of personal communication which they wished to be made. They cannot conceive how a respectful request to be favoured with such communication should have been designated by you "extraordinary proceedings;" nor how any business, however "defined and established," and with whatever urgency connected, could be able to restrain the Conference from simply forming and expressing an opinion whether it will grant the interview requested or not.

What the measures are which seem, from your statement, necessary to be taken before the subject of the address which has been sent to you can be brought before the Conference, the gentlemen in whose names I write to you are at a loss to conjecture, as they had deemed, according to a previous intimation of yours, that it was only necessary to present it, at a suitable opportunity, to the Conference, and obtain the instructions of your brethren on the subject.

It cannot, with propriety, be said that the immediate attention of your body was requested to this subject, when so much time had elapsed since the receiving the address of the Delegates, and the forwarding of the address to which you refer, although they did not anticipate that you would or could have adopted intermediate measures ere the attention of Conference was drawn to that document.

With the proper and usual business of the Conference the Delegates have no desire to interfere; much less have they given the slightest intimation, or con-



ceived the most distant thought, of altogether subjecting that business to their own wishes. They certainly did not think it would have been stepping beyond the bounds of your duty if you had ere this made known their request to the Conference; and they confidently expected, within some short period, to have received information from you whether or not the personal interview they solicited could be granted.

With whatever patience they might have waited for such an intimation, had it been promised to them, they are convinced that you must be sensible, on reflection, that they could not view it as other than strange that you should request them to wait two days longer before they can be assured whether such a promise can or can not be given.

It excites serious alarm in the minds of the Delegates that you should have said that no previous appointment with them could have been made. Though aware of the fact that an appointment with lay gentlemen, previous to the assembling of Conference, had been made, the equivocal nature of this expression leads them to fear that their stay in Sheffield may be useless. They hope that the insertion of such an expression, previous to ascertaining the instructions of your brethren on the subject, was an inadvertency; but they earnestly press upon your notice the propriety of informing them, within the shortest possible time, whether or not the request for a personal interview will be acceded to, as this, though you have not referred to it, was the point to which their address tended; and as an answer to this request is necessary to their forming a judgment on the expediency of remaining in Sheffield till the time you mention.

A definite answer will be expected to-morrow morning.

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.

*To the President of the Conference.*

August 5, 1835.

SIR,—Your note, dated August 4, was duly received last evening. I can now only repeat my former intimation, that you may confidently expect a communication from the Conference, in answer to your address, by twelve o'clock to-morrow.

*To Mr. G. Cookman.*

R. REECE.

The following is the final answer of Conference, which concludes the correspondence :—

TO MR. GEORGE COOKMAN.

*Carver-street, Sheffield, August 6, 1835.*

SIR,—The “Address to the Methodist Conference, assembled in Sheffield,” dated August 1, 1835, professing to proceed “from a numerous meeting of Wesleyan Delegates,” and signed “George Cookman, Chairman, Ralph Grindrod, Secretary,” has been read to the Conference, who have directed me, as their President, to return the following answer :—

I.—It is with the greatest surprise that the Conference have listened to a statement in the Address that the persons described are “Wesleyan Delegates,” and are “commissioned by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of members of the societies.” This surprise is founded on the fact that no information has yet reached the Conference from any quarter to justify the belief that any considerable number of our societies have either wished for, or concurred in, the appointment of delegates to any such meeting. Indeed, not a single circuit, or society, nor even any one *collective body of trustees* in the whole kingdom, has announced to the Conference its mission of any individual or individuals for purposes so irregular and unconstitutional; so that the Delegation or Commission, if it have really taken place to any thing like the extent asserted in the address, which is a matter quite unproved, must at all events be allowed to have been accomplished by means the reverse of those which are fair, open, and manly, and to come before the Conference and the Connexion in a singularly unauthenticated and equivocal character.

II.—But, even if this weighty objection to the statement of the “Address,” as to “Wesleyan Delegates,” could be removed, there is another which the Conference considered to be altogether insurmountable. It is founded on the broad and obvious principle of Methodism, and, indeed, of society in general,—whether civil or religious,—that such a plan of *confederated* delegations as that to which this address appears to refer, designed to interrupt or supersede, or intimidate the regular jurisdictions of our community, is calculated to subserve the purposes of agitation and faction; but can never consist with the maintenance of Christian order, edification, and peace.

III.—The Conference are constrained, on a calm review of various circumstances, to entertain the conviction that the meeting from which the address has

emanated, instead of being, as it is delusively termed, a Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, is in reality an adjourned meeting of the body of persons calling themselves "The Grand Central Association," of which a "provisional meeting" was held in Manchester in the month of April last. This conviction is confirmed by the notorious fact, that the Manchester meeting, in April, formally resolved, and agreed that an adjourned meeting of delegates connected with it should be procured and assembled in Sheffield at this very period; and that in the placards, and other advertisements published on this occasion, some expressly speak of an "adjourned meeting" of the said Association, and others, though professing to call an "adjourned meeting of Wesleyan Delegates," are as expressly stated to have been issued by "The Central Committee of the Association." The last mentioned advertisements were signed by William Smith and William Wood, the chairman and secretary of the Association's committee; and the very address now under consideration bears the signatures of the chairman and secretary of the Provisional Meeting of the Association, held in Manchester. It is therefore clear to the Conference, that this address is, in truth, a communication, however disguised, from the Grand Central Association itself, or from persons who, by attending its meetings, and other unequivocal tokens of sympathy and encouragement, are virtually identified with, and responsible for, the projects and proceedings of that Association.

IV.—Taking this view of the origin and character of the present address, the Conference deems it due, in Christian simplicity and candour, to announce at once its deliberate and unalterable resolution, not to hold any intercourse with the said Grand Central Association, or with any other meeting, howsoever denominated, into which persons who continue to be leading and active members of that confederacy, shall be notoriously admitted, and receive approbation and sanction.

That Association was avowedly formed on principles which we deem to be subversive of the essential constitution of Wesleyan Methodism. It has, in the meeting at Manchester and elsewhere, openly fraternized with various persons belonging to parties who have for a number of years ceased to have any connexion with our body, and are distinguished by the violence and injustice of their attacks on its members and its system. It has adopted a regular scheme and course of "agitation" in disgraceful imitation of certain political proceedings, tending, by public meetings and other means of disturbance, to the ultimate division of our societies, and to the great annoyance and discomfort of those of our flocks, who are desirous to live in peace and godly quietness. It has most wickedly, though happily with little effect, endeavoured to injure the public funds of the Connexion, and thus, by persuading those who hearkened to its counsels, to "stop the supplies," has placed itself in practical hostility to those great institutions of piety and mercy, both at home and abroad, to the promotion of which the funds in question are devoted. It has, by various publications, attacked in the most unmeasured and bitter language, that system which alone can with any truth or honesty be designated as *Wesleyan Methodism*, and advocated the substitution for it of other, and widely different plans of ecclesiastical government and discipline; plans which are subversive of the scriptural rights of the Christian ministry, and inconsistent with the pure and faithful discharge of the functions of the pastoral office; plans which, therefore, are not *Wesleyan Methodism*, and which it can only serve the purposes of delusion or self-deception to miscall by that honoured name.

It has, both in mixed meetings and by means of the press, carried on and encouraged a regular course of slander and calumny, directed against the Conference and its members, in reckless violation of the requirements of truth, of piety, of brotherly kindness, and even of common decency itself; and is identified with a system of periodical vituperation and abuse such as never before assailed a body of Christian Ministers and Pastors, on the part of persons still strangely professing, for the most part, to desire religious communion with the very men whom they habitually revile and hold up to public reprobation and scorn.

With such an Association, or with any meeting of persons who are directly or indirectly in fellowship with it, or who shall persevere, after due admonition and exhortation, in aiding or abetting its revolutionary and unhallowed projects, the Conference could not hold communication, without violating their duty to God, their fidelity to the great trust and deposit of genuine Methodism committed specially to their care, their pastoral obligations to the immense and overwhelming majority of their beloved societies, both at home and in foreign lands,—by whom

the divisive and disorderly principles of the Association are held in just abhorrence, and the proper regard which they owe to their own ministerial honour and character, so foully aspersed by the leading actors in the present scheme of organized disturbance and agitation.

V.—While the Conference, in the fear of God, thus announce their firm resolution on this subject, and are persuaded that it will have the cordial approbation of the great mass of our societies, and especially of those whose standing, piety, intelligence, and active support of Methodism best entitle their opinions on such topics to respectful consideration, they feel it also due to their beloved flocks in general, to those among the dissatisfied portion of their societies whom they willingly consider rather as the deluded and misled than as the deluders and misleaders of the party, and to their own sincere and long-cherished sentiments of what is right and fitting, to make the following declaration, namely:

That it is their intention to take into their most affectionate and careful consideration, partly at this Conference, as far as time can be found for such a task, when the indispensable business of their session shall have been transacted,—and partly at the earliest subsequent opportunity,—some of the most material of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the Connexion. They will engage in this work not with the purpose of making any one of those revolutionary changes which the Association has demanded, or of abandoning any one of those vital and important principles of pastoral administration which are embodied in Wesleyan Methodism, as now generally understood and exercised among us,—but in order to carry out the principles already recognised into yet more extensive and satisfactory operation, especially in relation to the financial affairs of the Connexion; and to provide, if possible, *additional guards and securities* for our people, in reference to the calm and temperate exercise of those scriptural powers which belong of right to the pastoral office, and are essential to the faithful discharge of its salutary and divinely appointed functions.

VI.—The Conference is also most happy to take this opportunity of declaring, that while decidedly opposed to the recognition of any divisive, and agitating Association or confederacy whatsoever, they are at all times ready to receive, with the most respectful attention, the friendly communications and suggestions of any member of their societies, (if unconnected with the “Grand” Central Association, or any such mischievous combination,) on topics tending not to the subversion, but to the conservation of our doctrines and discipline, and of the great and vital interests of the Connexion. They are willing to appoint proper persons, members of their body, to converse freely and kindly with any such persons who may request it, in order to afford such friendly explanations and pastoral counsel as they may need in the present crisis: and if any parties supposing themselves aggrieved or injured by certain acts of local discipline which have occurred during the last year, be disposed to forward their complaints to the Conference, in a peaceful and Christian spirit, and will promise to refrain in the meantime from all hostile proceedings, provision shall be made, as far as possible, to meet such cases—by Special Deputations from the Conference to the circuits concerned; which deputations, in conjunction with the district committee, shall be charged to enter upon a fair and impartial revision of those transactions; and to do justice to all parties on the basis of those long-tried and scriptural principles which the laws and usages of Methodism have ever recognised, and from which the Conference, by the blessing of God, ARE RESOLVED NEVER TO DEPART.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the Conference.

RICHARD REECE, President.

That the foregoing document, with “fury in the temper, famine in the phrase,” is in perfect keeping with the most extraordinary system of chicane and tyranny ever practised on the credulity of the pious, under the pretext of church discipline, is a fact not only known to thousands, and tens of thousands of its unsuspecting victims, not only evident to every one who has marked the progress of this protracted controversy, but felt and acknowledged even by the preachers themselves wherever they can safely give utterance to their undisguised sentiments, though such indeed is their prostrate condition, so completely are their minds enslaved under the system of Methodism *as it is*, that if they honestly dare, like free-born Englishmen, to exercise freedom of speech in Conference, it is at the risk, or rather the certainty of expulsion, and thus in too many instances they are reluctantly and unhappily compelled, out of regard to the temporal interests of their families (and let husbands and parents in humble circumstances, fancy the case their own before they indulge in unqualified censure) to become

sad examples to their flocks of prevarication and ingratitude. How injurious is the prevalence of such a system to the interests of true religion ! We regret that we have neither time nor space at present to comment as it deserves on this extraordinary composition of Jesuitical assumption, misrepresentation, slander, and abuse, so well calculated to blind and mislead the people ; but we shall not lose sight of it. The time of its publication was artfully contrived, and would have done honour to the party, who, no doubt, from equally disinterested and pious motives, omitted to enter the Articles of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797, in the journals. The ambiguity of Mr. President's phraseology is now explained. Under the pretence of more important business, though none in truth was of equal importance, the delegates were cunningly detained and amused with promises to the last moment, and then the definitive answer was sent, the Conference well knowing that the delegates could not have time to publish a reply to counteract its injurious tendency ; and thus by one of those happy strokes of policy which distinguish the "eminent" preachers, and in the success of which they trust for the maintenance of their ill-gotten power, a temporary advantage was obtained. We shall say a word or two on each paragraph as marked in the address.

I.—This paragraph contains specimens of despicable quibbling, and palpable untruths. Every member of Conference was long since apprized of the actual state of the Connexion. The fact that tens of thousands were "dissatisfied" was sworn to in the Court of Chancery pending the cause of Dr. Warren, and Messrs. Newton and Bunting were present when the affidavits were read. To look at their address only, one might suppose the Conference had never heard of this case, nor seen Stephens's report of the trial ; one would naturally conclude that they had never read any newspaper but their own *Watchman*, never seen reports from superintendents of circuits, and shut their eyes to what was passing before them. That the delegates at Manchester represented the "dissatisfied portion of the societies" is well known, and that thousands have since complained of illegal expulsion is equally notorious. If their mode of applying for redress was irregular, the ex-President and Conference only are to blame. The ex-President declared that the people ought no where to complain except at their quarterly meetings ; then he sent circulars to the superintendents commanding them, by every means in their power, to prevent the complainants from there expressing their sentiments. When in Whitehaven about a fortnight since, the ex-President inquired if any instance of misrule or unlawful expulsion had occurred, and declared himself perfectly ready to redress the aggrieved party, but insisted that the people had nothing to do with what happened in other circuits, and denied that, in *any one instance*, an individual had been expelled without the decision of a *majority* of a leaders' meeting. Cases were cited, but he met them by a flat denial, saying, that the people had heard nothing but misrepresentations. And this same ex-President, instead of a vote of censure or expulsion which he richly deserved, actually received from Conference a vote of thanks, chiefly, we presume, on account of his notable expedient of first blocking up the regular channels, and then accusing the people of irregular proceedings. To crown this piece of precious Jesuitism and fraud, the Conference affect surprise at the appearance of "Wesleyan Delegates,"—surprise "founded on the *fact* that *no information* had reached them from *any* quarter to justify the belief that any considerable number of the societies had either wished for, or concurred in, the appointment of delegates to any such meeting ;" yet in a subsequent paragraph, (No. III,) they flatly contradict themselves by quoting "the notorious fact, that the Manchester meeting in April formally resolved and agreed that an adjourned meeting of delegates connected with it should be procured and assembled in Sheffield at this very period." At the Manchester meeting seventy-four delegates and thirty-four members of the "Central Committee" attended. The Sheffield meeting consisted of about 100 delegates, several from various places not previously connected with the Association, besides "a multitude that no man could number" of communications from "dissatisfied societies" hitherto thought neutral, and as yet unknown to the Conference. But why all this quibbling between the words "Grand Central Association" and "Wesleyan Methodist Delegates ?" Is such wretched sophistry necessary to the maintenance of "Christian order, edification, and peace ?" or is it adopted "to subserve the purposes" of the dominant Conference faction ? As to numbers and names of places, the proceedings of the delegates will soon be published, along with abstracts from the mass of correspondence on the present state of the circuits, which will set the question at rest, and increase the *surprise* of Conference.

II.—Displays gross ignorance of the history of England, of ecclesiastical history



generally, and even of Methodism—(*vide Arminian Magazine* for 1795, p. 467)—all of which furnish illustrious instances of the people confederating to purify the corruptions of the church; and God crowned their exertions with success.

III.—Proves the *fact* that Conference *had* received *much* and authentic information, contrary to the statement contained in the first paragraph; it also shows what the *Illuminator* would call the “ineffable hypocrisy” of their affected “surprise!”

IV.—The Christian *simplicity* and *candour* of the dominant party are too well known to require any comment. The efficacy of “stopping the supplies” is, indeed, fairly acknowledged; but the allusion to political proceedings is in bad taste, inasmuch as it proceeds from the editors and proprietors of the *Watchman*, the *Magazine*, the *Illuminator*, and various other publications, not altogether guiltless of the charge of carrying on a regular course of slander and calumny, directed against the Association, in reckless violation of the requirements of truth, of piety, of brotherly kindness, and even of common decency itself. The unalterable resolution not to hold *any* intercourse with the said “Grand Central Association,” already merged in the superior title of “Wesleyan Methodist Association,” because no longer central, but universal, is unchristian, haughty, and ridiculously equivocal; it may, perhaps, last twelve months, but not longer!

V.—Notwithstanding the self-complacency of the GREAT UNKNOWN, as displayed in the beginning of this paragraph, we deny that the principles of pastoral administration are generally, or at all understood; on the contrary, they are so conflicting, arbitrary, and unsettled, that neither the preachers nor the people understand them. It has been held lawful to sell the *Illuminator*; but not the *Lantern*: to take the stupid *Watchman* is lawful; but to read the energetic *Advocate* is unlawful: it is a crime, visited with expulsion, to refuse contributing to the annual collection; but a man may never read the word of God, use family or private prayer, attend public worship, class-meetings, or sacraments, and yet not be immoral. These are some of the vaunted principles of Methodism *as it is*! We say, further, that Dr. Bunting’s propositions are no improvement, and not worth a straw; they confirm the power of superintendents, confine circuit meetings to circuit matters only, and prevent freedom of discussion.

VI.—It is quite unnecessary to consider this paragraph. Like the President it promises fair, but performance is a kind of will or testament which argues “a great sickness in his judgment that makes it.”—Notwithstanding these fine promises, several deputations, from societies which are still in connexion, after waiting day after day for an audience, retired in disgust: those from Rochdale and Bury afterwards joined the Association.—These remarks have already occupied a greater space than we anticipated. In conclusion we say to the President,—Restrain the agents of Conference from wilfully misrepresenting and vilifying the Wesleyan Methodist Association; “for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, (as we sincerely believe,) ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.”

We have scarcely room left to request the indulgence of our correspondents till our next, and to call the reader’s attention to the following most important resolution passed by the delegates, among whom, we are happy to add, the greatest unanimity and harmony prevailed:—

“That it be recommended to the friends of Methodist Reform in every part of our Connexion not to unite themselves with any other religious body, nor to form themselves into any separate community, but to act in concert and remain associated together until the next Conference, under regulations afterwards to be submitted, and to be designated the Wesleyan Methodist Association, the great object of which shall be to regain and effectually secure the rights and liberties of the Wesleyan community.”

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TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
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## ON THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND DANGEROUS POWER OF THE CONFERENCE.

The advocates of Methodism, *as it is*, contend that the Conference is not altogether irresponsible, inasmuch as it is responsible to public opinion. There might be some force in the argument if the Conference were a representative body, whose proceedings were open to public investigation; but it is a pure hierarchy, a compact aristocracy; the priesthood in it is the supreme and only power. There is not one representative of the people in the Conference. Let all its members have equal rights, still its constitution is radically and shamefully defective; and the merest novice in history will know what to expect from such a body. It is a *permanent* assembly, allows no publicity to be given to its acts except by its own secretary, and if any knowledge of its proceedings transpires through any other channel, the greatest curiosity, anxiety, and alarm is observable among the officials, the ex-presidents and expectant presidents, who use their utmost endeavours to trace out the heterodox liberals, until at length some one is fixed upon as the delinquent. A Rev. Doctor on the platform then calls the suspected culprit by name, and demands from him, *as in the presence of God*, whether he communicated the information to certain newspapers or periodicals. If he acknowledges the fact, his doom is sealed; if he denies it, the Doctor consoles himself and his friends by declaring he will spare no pains to find out the "vile brother."

There is no corporation in England so perfectly irresponsible as the Conference. Members of Parliament are elected for seven years, but they seldom enjoy their senatorial honours for a longer period than half "the septennial promise," when a dissolution sends them back to their constituents; but members of Conference are appointed for life. The proceedings of Parliament are open to the public; those of Conference are secret. If members of Parliament were elected for life, and their proceedings conducted in secrecy, what would become of their responsibility? Now, one thing is too obvious to be passed over. No man who values the laws and liberties of his country would elect members of Parliament for life, even on condition that their acts should be subject to freedom of discussion; yet, strange to tell, there are Methodists, mistaken men, who would confirm for ever the secret sittings of Conference, although its members are appointed for life! Can that be a good, wise, or safe system which makes it a crime to give the slightest publicity to what passes in Conference, and denounces, as a criminal, the man who publishes truths which it concerns every member of the Connexion to know? What sort of an assembly must that be in which a man can have the effrontery to stand forth, amidst hundreds of approving voices, and denounce another, perhaps a better

man than himself, as "base and vile," for divulging matters which reason, justice, and religion forbid to be kept secret? The Conference, like all other permanent assemblies, has acquired a certain corporation spirit, a sentiment has grown up in it of self-importance, arrogance, and tenaciousness to all external parties, and also of domination over the few members of its own body who exhibit any marks of independence and want of participation in the corporate sympathies. But this spirit in the supreme legislature is checked and kept down by the publicity of its transactions; no gross act of arrogance or injustice towards its own members, or any other parties, can escape the animadversions of the public.

We extract the following from an excellent work, the author of which is deeply skilled in the mysteries of Methodism:—

"That Methodism (*as it is*) is as yet guiltless of the moral injuries inflicted by Jesuitism on society is admitted, but how long, except it be restrained by public opinion, it will remain dissimilar in this respect, they can best judge who have read its history, considered its principles, and observed some of its more recent acts.

"The number of Methodists in Great Britain, Ireland, and America, including several seceding branches, can hardly be less than one million of souls. Out of this number, there are under the direction of the English Conference about three hundred thousand. To these and to their priesthood we shall limit our attention. These three hundred thousand are all 'in society,' as it is termed; that is, they are 'the church,' to use the language of the Calvinists,—persons admitted to the enjoyment of religious privileges, of which the congregation, as a congregation, is destitute. Over these there are captains of tens, and captains of twenties, and captains of hundreds,—in other terms, class leaders, local preachers, itinerant preachers, superintendents, and, finally, Conference; each subordinated to his superior in regular ascent till you arrive at the *summum imperium*; and subordinated in such a way that the opportunities of religious improvement, of social intercourse, the exercise of moral influence, the preservation of a good reputation, and, to no small extent, success in business and comfort in life, depend upon obedience to the superior's will. This representation will make it clear to all that the Conference possesses a wide and extensive channel, down which they may pour whatever principles they please; and that, supposing each part of the constitution to discharge its functions, they sway a power of no ordinary magnitude. But their influence rests not here. It is not easy for us to say what is the proportion which the members of the Methodist body bear to the audiences which attend their public services. It can hardly, we think, be more than one-third. Assuming this, about a million of persons are in this kingdom under the influence of the Conference. It is true that those who are not 'in society' are not in bonds so numerous as are the initiated; but many of them are probationers for admission; most of them approve the principles taught in the pulpits, and are under that degree of moral influence which always arises when men are brought into close connexion one with another: so that the English Conference, which is the supreme dictator, has an influence more or less direct, and of greater or less magnitude, over a million of the inhabitants of this country. We pass over the fact that more than a million of persons in America feel somewhat, and about sixty thousand in Ireland, a considerable portion, of its power. Out of the million of persons in Great Britain, how many there may be who are masters of families we have no means of ascertaining; but it is evident, that if we suppose a fourth of these to have children and servants under their control, and to infuse into their minds the principles which they themselves take from their spiritual guides, the number of souls under the influence of the Conference will be considerably increased. In addition, the children who are educated in their Sunday-schools are, to a great extent, imbued with the peculiarities of their system. Their number we do not *know*, but have reason to believe it not less than a hundred thousand. From these data, we may, we think, infer, that about two millions of persons, young and old, are at the present moment subject to influences from the English Conference. These influences relate not merely to matters purely religious, but to moral and political questions. The *esprit de corps* prevails nowhere more strongly than among the Methodists. It extends its sway from religion to the ordinary pursuits of life. In almost all things, they act, if

at all, in a body, and, as a body, act rather in consequence of orders received from the higher powers than from individual convictions. They are truly a church militant. The President of the Conference is the Generalissimo; he with his staff officers, few we understand in number, issues the word of command, and all the army begins to move; he cries 'halt,' and forthwith they stop; he saith 'to this man Go, and he goeth, and to another Come, and he cometh.' This union of action is observed in all matters of great concernment; in relation to charitable institutions, human rights and human wrongs, the interests of the race and the interests of individuals, the election of a member of Parliament, and the election of a parish apothecary. Nor do we hesitate to say, that to our apprehension it proceeds mostly in the wrong way. The influence of the Conference is, for the most part, anti-liberal. They are, as will appear in the sequel, tyrants themselves, and they seem generally to incline to the side of tyranny. It has, in fact, been put forth by them as a plea in their favour, that they have checked innovation, been pillars to the state in perilous times, and prevented thousands from becoming absolute Dissenters.

"The number of Methodist itinerant preachers throughout the world, exclusive of those who minister to the several swarms that have left the original hive, is, we are told on authority, 3003. Of these 1041 are under the control of the English Conference. More than thrice that number, we should think, are engaged as local preachers; so that about 4000 persons are now employed in diffusing abroad the principles of Methodism, (*as it is,*) that is, in building up and extending the influence of the Conference.

"Another source of influence is the disposition of money. But in this particular we are greatly at a loss. The Conference have taken care, and, notwithstanding opposition on this point, do still take care that very much shall not be known of their pecuniary concerns. From inquiries which we have made, we have reason to think that the average amount of the salaries of Methodist preachers is at least £200 a year. This will make the money paid to those who are in connexion with the English Conference £208,200. In addition to this, the Conference is the sole owner of all the chapels through the kingdom,—of a school-house at Kingswood, near Bristol, and an academy at Woodhouse-grove, Yorkshire. Then the Conference has in its hands the publication of the books which the Methodist public purchases, and by itself or agents the distribution of all moneys raised for charitable objects, the aid of the poor, the support of Sunday-schools, the maintenance of superannuated preachers. These things considered, it will be clear that the power of the Conference arising from the money under its directions must be very considerable. Another question remains—Who is the Conference? In whose hands does all this power rest? The Conference is thought to consist of all the Methodist travelling preachers, but in fact a small party rules the Connexion. The *legal* Conference consisted at the time of Wesley's death of one hundred members, to whom he conveyed all his rights. The survivors and successors of these have all legal power in their own hands, and, in fact, they reserve to themselves the privilege of electing the President and Secretary of the Conference, whose power is all but supreme, and permit as many more of the remaining preachers as they think fit to be present at their sittings. Out of these hundred persons, there are, we are informed, some few ambitious persons who rule the rest, and through them and other subordinate agents, the whole of the Connexion, and that too not according to the laws of Methodism, but at times in direct contravention of these, and according to their own will and with a view to consolidate their own power. They are a hierarchy with most lofty notions. Yes, these priests who but yesterday were earning their bread by the sweat of their brow, now talk and act in the most priestly manner,—talk of their inherent rights, their legitimate pastoral authority, their aversion to democratical principles, and act in defiance of remonstrance, spurning restraint, and in the supremacy of their own wills. A few whose names have been of late much before the public, are the dictators of the Conference. To them, all the rest are little better than puppets. But what their servants lose of power in obeying the dictators, they regain in the sway which each in his sphere exerts over his inferiors. These few rule the Conference, the Conference rule the preachers, the preachers rule the leaders, the leaders rule the people. This outline does not contain all the grades. Each district, each circuit, has a ghostly leader, supreme in his sphere, besides stewards and trustees to do his bidding, and people to do—what? to pay his demands. This is the only function which we can find the people exercise. And if any of those who are over them, to lead them as others direct, presume to demur and remonstrate, the thunders of excommunication, not altogether a *brutum fulmen*, are



launched to put to silence the audacious mortal. How is it the people endure all this? Partly because they are used to it, partly because they are not for the most part over well informed, partly because they are terrified into obedience. Yes, the old trick is not seldom resorted to of frightening the people into obedience by intimations of spiritual danger and final destruction."

It is difficult to imagine a more complete organ of tyranny than the Methodist Conference *as at present constituted*. It unites in itself the legislative, the judicial, and the executive powers. The Conference makes the laws at its annual meetings; the members of Conference execute the laws, and judge delinquents in their several stations through the country; it possesses the sole right of property in some hundreds of chapels; it has immense sums of money at its disposal; it is irresponsible, except to public opinion, and that it does its best to keep down; there is not one layman among its members; it is a pure hierarchy; its spirit is the grasping and tenacious spirit of the priesthood, and its rule a priestly domination. Even the local preachers, associated with the priesthood as they are in the work, performing, as they do, most of the drudgery of it, and mainly contributing to the raising of the vast sums disposed of by the Conference, are totally banished from its precincts. Though many of the itinerants, all the local preachers, and all the people, are without any voice or any representative in the Conference, the ruling powers did not stop here. They next made themselves a supreme court of judicature, where all differences between the itinerant and the local preachers, and between the itinerants and the people, shall be finally decided without an appeal. Here, then, we see the priests are parties in the cause, and judge and jury in the trial. As every member in the Conference is laid under an obligation not to reveal what passes among them, their method of proceeding gives them the fullest opportunity of being always in the right, and justifying one another, as well as proving their opponents in the wrong. What a mockery of the very forms of common justice! "The Conference must be absolute masters," says their first President, in a letter to a preacher; that is, must have the sole disposal of all the chapels in the three kingdoms, of collections every where made, of the income of the Book-room, of all the offices held in the society, and the influence connected with them; of all the religious rights of the preachers and people; must have the power of doing as they will, right or wrong, in their several cures, and justifying their conduct in their corporate capacity. A company of laymen, (as most are) taken from their trades, and cherished and fed by the people on account of their supposed simplicity, piety, and zeal, combine together, invade the rights of their brethren, and assume a more absolute authority than ever was attempted by the most arbitrary priest in any church! What can be more astonishing? And does any one expect that these men, who make themselves judge and jury in their own cause, will ever do an act of justice to the prejudice of their own usurped authority? They have, indeed, inserted the Plan of Pacification in the journals, accompanied by a statement that the Conference has always recognised it as its act; and Dr. Bunting's propositions will shortly be published in the Minutes. For ourselves, we feel it difficult to understand how men who were so far moved by the spirit of liberty as to leave their homes, and brave the holy anger of their spiritual guides in quest of it, could have been satisfied with the arrangements that took place in 1797. A child in legislation might

have told them that the Conference had, in its pretended concessions, done nothing more than varnish their chains. Nor do we find that some of the advocates of the rights of the people in the present day understand very much better than their predecessors the nature and extent of religious liberty: they have so long sat in darkness, that their vision is dull; they have been in bondage till the thoughts of "perfect freedom" have perished in their minds. How else could they waste their time and resources in debating about infringements on a constitution which is framed to enslave the many to the will of the few? There are among them some whose understanding is better than their courage; who know what they ought to have, yet dare not ask for it.

We shall content ourselves at present with the following extract:—

"Two hundred lay delegates assembled at Leeds in 1797, and extorted from the Conference some further concessions. We say extorted, and so it was. The Conference themselves speak of 'the sacrifices, in respect to authority, which we have made;' and they conceded what little the people got, only through fear. Let us look at these concessions—to prevent which the Conference had laboured foully, fairly, and strenuously. Even from what they gave, their spirit will be manifest. They agreed to publish an annual account of *some* of the moneys under their direction. They agreed that the stewards of the circuit (in some sense the organ of the people) should be allowed to audit certain demands for the support of the travelling preachers. They increased in appearance the power of the local functionaries in temporal concerns—in appearance, we say, because as the system works these functionaries have really little, if any, more power than the superintendent, that is, the servant of the Conference, chooses to allow. These things, with a few others, they gave,—acting thereon as a holy alliance ought to act, *giving* a constitution (and such an one!) to the people. And what did they withhold? They withheld that without which all their concessions were but dupery,—the right of the people to share in the legislation by which they were to be governed. A demand was made for the admission of delegates from the people into Conference, but it was rejected. It was also requested that delegates should be appointed to sit in a room near Conference to sanction the laws before they were established: but this was not admitted.

"They withheld also, as far as they could, the right of free speech. They limited the number of meetings to be held in each circuit. They defined the business to be therein transacted. They made their nominee supreme in these meetings. They forbade all others, and imposed penalties on such as should venture to call "informal" meetings. They declared they would receive no communication from any meetings but such as they had appointed, and they inhibited their deputy, the superintendent, from putting to the vote at the regular meetings any motion hostile to the discipline of Methodism. They had previously thrown all the impediments they could in the way of the circulation of opinion, by letter or by the press, among the members of the Connexion. Witness the following extracts from the minutes: 'Let no man nor number of men in our Connexion on any account or occasion circulate letters, call meetings, do or attempt to do any thing *new*, till it has been first appointed by Conference.' 'As the preachers are eminently one body, nothing should be done by any individual which would be prejudicial to the whole or to any part thereof. Therefore no preacher shall publish any thing but what is given to the Conference and printed in our own press. The Book-committee to determine what is proper to be printed,' that is, approved by the very persons who were accused, in the publications of the day, of usurpation and tyranny. Thus the guilty sought by preventing the agitation of 'any thing new' to prolong their despotism, and by a censorship on the press to keep the Connexion in ignorance of existing abuses and their inalienable rights. As if the people were not, by these provisions, sufficiently bound and trammelled, they made the decision of Conference, in any disputed case, paramount; and, by certain regulations, to which the delegates never acceded, but which the authorities assert to form part of the constitution of 1797, they invested the President of the Conference for the time being, with supreme power to visit any district, and "to inquire into their affairs with respect to Methodism, and in union with the district committee, to redress any grievance." In the whole of this affair the Conference acted in the spirit of the following quotation, made by one now in authority in the body: 'Of this we are sure, that the most effectual way to corrupt

any society, and to kindle and keep alive passions and feelings inimical to the simplicity and charity of the Gospel, is to encourage the *debating propensity*, and to elevate those into legislators and public censors who have not previously learned to *submit with humility and meekness to proper authority*. To secure the people's acquiescence in these arbitrary enactments, they did not, *suo more*, plead divine guidance, but vaunted their generosity, declaring, with no small effrontery, — 'Thus brethren, we have given up the greatest part of our executive government into your hands.'

We respectfully and earnestly recommend our readers, particularly trustees, stewards, local preachers, and leaders, not only seriously to reflect upon this most important subject, but at once to come boldly forward with all their energies to assist the people in recovering the rights which they had from God; for it is quite clear that the notions of church government entertained by the ruling party in Conference are not only opposed to the practice of the Methodists of all other denominations, the Church of England, the Baptists and Independents, the Kirk of Scotland, the Seceders, and all denominations of Dissenters both in England, America, and throughout Europe, but are directly at variance with the precepts of the Apostles, and the example of the primitive churches.

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### ROCHDALE CIRCUIT.

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In page 311 we stated the reasons which induced this circuit to address the President, and afterwards the Conference, and in the following page the reader will find the address which was agreed to, 15th February, sixty-six officers being present, fifty-eight of whom voted for it, five against it, and three were neutral. In our last number we mentioned that the official members from Rochdale, after waiting several days at Sheffield for an interview with the Conference, retired in disgust, and afterwards joined the delegates. These remarks will perhaps render the following spirited and important resolutions more intelligible to the reader.

At a meeting of the Wesleyan office-bearers in the Rochdale Circuit, held 19th August, 1835, for the purpose of receiving a report of the proceedings of the deputation which was appointed on the 15th ult., to present an address to the Conference, and of considering what further measures should be adopted, — *It was resolved*,

1.—That this meeting hears, with surprise and sorrow, that Conference will not grant what we conceive to be the just and reasonable demands of the people.

2.—That, though the result of our application to Conference is highly unsatisfactory, yet, we do not despair of obtaining a reform in Wesleyan Methodism, based on the scriptural principle, "*that the express concurrence of the people is necessary in all important matters, such as legislation, finance, and the administration of discipline*." We, therefore, pledge ourselves to persevere in the use of all *Christian-like* means for the attainment of such reform.

3.—That should an attempt be made in this circuit (as has been in others) illegally to expel from Society any who take an active part in Wesleyan reform, we now record our firm determination neither to submit to, nor acknowledge, any expulsion which is not in accordance with the following good old Methodist rule:—"No leader or steward can be put out of his place but by a majority of leaders, or a quarterly meeting. Neither can any member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a leaders' meeting."

4.—That *this is, and was intended to be*, a fundamental and unalterable rule of Methodism, is most certain: and for these reasons,—1st.—It is in *perfect harmony* with the *spirit* of the regulations of 1797, at which Conference the Methodist Constitution was, in its leading principles, settled on a *permanent* foundation. 2.—The Conference of 1797, after *concisely* stating to the people the *sense* of what had been agreed upon, promise that the rules shall be published for the benefit of the members, when they will have the whole at large. And, in accordance with this promise, the rules were so published by the Conference agent, G. Story, in 1798, of which rules the one we have quoted is a most important one as respects discipline. 3.—This edition of rules having been all distributed throughout the Connexion, a *second* was published in 1800, by the said G. Story, who was still the Conference agent, and in this second edition this same important rule is found, and the whole of these rules were sold or given by the travelling preachers, as the acknowledged and settled rules of the Connexion. This shows beyond dispute *what was*, and

therefore still is, the rule respecting expulsions, as finally agreed upon by the preachers and people in 1797.

5. That many of us having accepted office, and some become responsible for large sums of money, in the full belief that this was an essential and unchangeable rule of Methodism, and such being still our conviction, we shall be traitors to ourselves, to our office, to the cause of God, and to posterity, if we were to suffer it to be violated; it will therefore be with us a matter of conscience (and being so, we will never swerve) to resist to the utmost any one who dares to break or evade this good old rule of genuine Methodism.

6.—That, should any member be illegally expelled in this circuit, whose moral character is unimpeached, we hereby assure such person that we feel towards him and in every respect treat him as a Brother beloved. And should all, or the major part of us, be so expelled, we are deliberately determined still to consider ourselves Wesleyan Methodists. We will still cleave to each other as members of the same persecuted portion of the Christian Church. We will, as formerly, meet together in all the social means of grace: and as the trustees have power to bring to trial any preacher who is immoral, who breaks our rules, who is deficient in abilities, or whose doctrines are not Wesleyan, and as our attachment to those doctrines is unshaken and unabated, we will not leave the chapels which we and our fathers have reared, nor will we be driven away from the sanctuaries under the droppings of which we and our families have so often and so greatly profited. Whilst on the one hand we relax not in our efforts to obtain Wesleyan reform, on the other, we will studiously avoid all unseemly excitement, all angry feeling, and all attempts at separation from the Church. We will stand in our Lot, confidently believing and praying that He, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, will speedily restore peace to our Zion, and prosperity to our Jerusalem. Amen.

7.—That these resolutions be printed, and distributed to all the members in this circuit.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

SAMUEL HEAPE,

Chairman, Circuit Steward, Leader, Local Preacher, and Trustee.

N.B.—There were present at the meeting above seventy officers, out of whom three only opposed any of the resolutions.

The following report of the trials of Messrs. EMMETT and AVERILL, as published by the *Christian Advocate*, will, we doubt not, be highly interesting to our readers:—

#### TRIAL AND EXPULSION OF MR. ROBERT EMMETT.

Mr. Robert Emmett having taken his seat in the Conference, (Aug. 4,) Mr. Sumner commenced reading over the charges preferred against him at the Darlington District Meeting; after which the judgment of the meeting was read also. He then read the protest which Mr. Emmett delivered, objecting to the constitution of the court; at the same time he stated, that he only knew of Mr. Emmett's intention to appeal to the Conference the day before its opening. Mr. Emmett replied, that he thought his protest against the constitution of the court was a sufficient notice. Mr. Sumner, after having read Mr. Emmett's protest against the constitution of the court, as anti-Methodistic, stated that it was without a date! thereby attempting to throw an obstacle in the way of his right of appeal. Mr. Emmett stated that Mr. Sumner had actually received it before the termination of the meeting at which he was suspended! The President then inquired what had been Mr. Emmett's conduct since his suspension, and whether he had behaved himself Methodistically? Mr. Sumner replied, that he had done any thing and every thing but submit; that he had been concerned in a triumphal tea-party in Darlington, at which about 300 persons were present, at which an address was delivered to him, not at all in accordance with Methodism; that he had preached in places not at all under his (Mr. Sumner's) control; and, in addition to all the rest, that he had said to him, "You are in the high road to Popery; only go on, and you will arrive at it soon." He also stated that Mr. Emmett had called on him with his report of the trial, and had requested him to examine it, as he wished to have a correct one sent to the press, but that he had declined acceding to his request, adding, that the report was very incorrect, and calculated to make the preachers appear as ninny-hammers.

Another preacher then informed the Conference that Mr. Emmett had preached in the Methodist chapel at Worksop on the preceding Sabbath; on which the President stated that there were in the town of Worksop several disaffected members, and asked Mr. Emmett who had invited him to preach there; to which he replied that a friend in Sheffield had requested him to visit his old



circuit, and that he had complied with his request, and had met with a very cordial reception. Dr. Bunting then asked, Does not Mr. Emmett know, that in having done so, he has committed a robbery? Mr. Emmett replied, he was not at all aware of that.

Another preacher then asked whereabouts in Sheffield he had met with his friend; was it in Surrey-street chapel? Mr. Emmett declined answering the question.

Mr. Newton asked Mr. Emmett if he had not pledged himself to stand or fall with the Association, as he had met with a letter in his travels written by him, and addressed to the Association, which had been put into his hands either by a *pedlar* or a *beggar*, or somebody of that class!

Mr. Entwistle, or Mr. Gaulter, said Mr. Emmett had better retire and join himself to some other denomination, as leaving the Connexion was not leaving Christ.

Dr. Bunting then read a Minute from the Conference Journal of 1833, to the purport that Mr. Emmett had expressed regret at having caused pain to his brethren, and had, in effect, engaged to abstain in future from all interference with Methodistical disputes. Mr. Emmett immediately rose, and earnestly disclaimed having made any such pledge; on which several preachers who were members of the committee which sat on his case at Manchester, rose up, and most solemnly and deliberately affirmed that he had actually made such engagement. Mr. Emmett repeated his denial, on which several preachers made various unpleasant observations. Mr. Emmett acknowledged that he had expressed regret at having been placed in circumstances of apparent hostility to the preachers, but maintained that the only pledge he was called upon to give, was to renounce the *Circular*, and enter into an engagement to read it no more. Mr. Emmett immediately withdrew the expression, at the same time asserting that he had given no pledge whatever, which seemed to be construed by the preachers into a quibble. Dr. Bunting then asked Mr. Emmett if he would *now* give the pledge, and work in harmony with his brethren? Mr. Emmett replied, that was a very comprehensive question; when several preachers indulged in mirth. Dr. Bunting then asked if Mr. Emmett approved of the objects of the Grand Central Association? Mr. Emmett replied, that he considered the views of the Association as more in accordance with the system of Wesleyan Methodism as described in the Plan of Pacification of 1795 and Concessions of 1797, and, therefore, he could not work with the Conference as Methodism was now administered; on which one or two preachers said, "That is honest!" It was then proposed that Mr. Emmett should retire.

On Mr. Emmett's entrance into the Conference the following morning, the President arose, and proceeded to deliver the final judgment of the preachers in his case. He began by observing that it was his solemn duty to deliver the sentence of the body to which he had belonged; that, although, in the grosser sense of the word, he was not charged with immorality, yet, by having sown the seeds of division, speaking evil of the preachers, attending public meetings, &c., he had rendered himself liable to expulsion, and he therefore proceeded to pronounce that, by a unanimous vote of Conference, he was expelled from the body.

Mr. Emmett observed, that in the steps which he had taken in the whole of the proceedings in his case, he had cautiously abstained from speaking evil of the preachers, both in his speeches and letters, nor had he thrown any imputation on their characters because they differed from him in the views they had taken on the subjects on which they so greatly differed.

The President replied, that by having connected himself with the Association, and with those that had adopted such a course, he was justly chargeable with that offence.

Mr. Emmett then said, that in all the steps which he had taken, he had acted conscientiously and from principle. He had read pretty extensively Church history, the Scriptures of truth, and the rules of the Methodist Society, as published at the Book-room in 1798 and 1800, in which private members and officers of the society were to be expelled on the principle of a majority, and, under such views, he could not adopt any other course than the one he had adopted. Mr. Emmett was proceeding with his remarks, when he was stopped by the President, on which he hoped that he might be allowed to proceed with his defence, but was told that he could not be allowed, as the Conference had thought it right to confirm the decision of the Darlington District Meeting. Mr. Emmett then said that he should refer the sentence of the Conference to a higher tribunal, before which they must all appear, and he confidently expected a decision from that bar of a very different description.

## MR. AVERILL'S TRIAL AND EXPULSION.

In pursuance of notice given to the Rev. John Averill, that he would be required to appear before the bar of the House, Mr. Averill took his seat in the Conference.

The PRESIDENT inquired, whether *such a person* as Mr. Averill were present. Mr. Averill replied, "I am here."

The PRESIDENT asked how *such a person* could gain admittance into the Conference, without notice thereof being sent to him.

Mr. AVERILL said, he had informed the door-keeper who he was, and what was his business, and that he had attended by order of the President.

The PRESIDENT then said, that Mr. Averill ought to have signified, through the medium of the Chairman of the district, his intention to appeal against the decision of the district meeting, but that, on Saturday morning, he (the President) had received a note from Mr. Averill saying that such was his intention. It, therefore, remained for the Conference to say, whether it would look over this informality, and allow Mr. Averill, *as a favour*, to make his appeal. It could only be allowed as an act of mercy: all right to such privilege had been forfeited. "But," said the President, "if the Conference errs, it is on the side of mercy; and, on that side, it has erred to its own injury, in not being strict enough in enforcing its own discipline." He then inquired what had been Mr. Averill's conduct since his suspension?

Mr. MARTIN (the Chairman of the Plymouth District) said, that Mr. Averill's conduct (Mr. Martin frequently said *Brother Averill*, but always corrected himself by saying *Mr. Averill*) since his suspension, had been such as to lead the district meeting unanimously to decide, that Mr. Averill ought to have no more place among them. He denounced the resolutions of the Christmas Quarterly Meeting at Camelford, as revolutionary, and calculated to produce disorder and prove highly injurious to the Wesleyan body, and said, that, in consequence of Mr. Averill not having supported his superintendent in his opposition to those resolutions, and for other acts, twelve charges were preferred against him. Mr. Martin added, that, at the last Conference, the circuit was in a peaceful and prosperous state, and that, in consequence of the introduction of those resolutions, and Mr. Averill's subsequent irregular conduct, the circuit was now in a state of rebellion; and, instead of having between 600 and 700 members, he questioned if 100 could be found.

Mr. NEWTON said, that no further discussion was necessary, as he held in his hand a printed plan with Mr. Averill's name at the head, and on which also were the names of a number of other persons, acting under his direction. Mr. Averill and those persons had recognised the Association, and taken up the cause of Dr. Warren; for, at the bottom of the plan, was an announcement for a collection to aid the Doctor in liquidating the expenses of his Chancery suits. He inquired if Mr. Averill acknowledged that plan?

Mr. AVERILL said he did; that no other plan had been printed since the division in the circuit, and that it was necessary that it should be printed, to preserve order and union amongst them, and to prevent the people from being lost to the Connexion.

Mr. NEWTON observed that Mr. Averill had taken possession of the chapel in the circuit. It was inquired whether the chapel was settled on the Conference plan. It was answered that it was. At this announcement the preachers seemed to be greatly shocked, and it was reiterated from every part of the chapel, "We will soon have the chapels again."

Mr. MARTIN stated, that the only reason Mr. Averill had assigned for not taking his trial before the district meeting, was the refusal of that meeting to allow all those persons whom he called his friends and witnesses to attend *en masse*.

Mr. Averill, not being allowed to appeal against the decision of the district meeting, had no opportunity of gainsaying Mr. Martin's statements, or of giving his own version of his case.

The PRESIDENT rose and said, "I know not what immorality is, if such conduct be not of that character." He then spoke of the injurious effects Mr. Averill's conduct must have on the minds of the people.

It was inquired whether, when he came to Sheffield, he intended to appeal against the decision of the district meeting?

Mr. AVERILL said, he certainly did. He was then asked if he had not preached for the Delegates in Sheffield. The confusion was so great that Mr. Averill had no opportunity of replying to this question.

Mr. Averill was asked on what ground he claimed the right of appeal. He replied,

1. That though he had not given notice of appeal in writing through the chairman of the district, yet, as soon as he was informed that the Conference required it, (for he was not aware that there was any law on the subject,) he instantly wrote a note to the President, intimating that such was his intention. He therefore pleaded ignorance as his excuse for that technical omission.

2. That such a privilege ought certainly to be allowed him, as he had otherwise no opportunity of defending himself against the charges preferred against him at the district meeting.

3. Because, if he were not allowed to make that appeal, the Conference must remain in considerable ignorance as to the real state of things in the Camelford circuit.

Mr. AVERILL thought that, if they would listen to a correct statement of the facts relative to the circuit, a very different impression would be made upon the minds of the preachers. They would see that he had been necessitated to take the course he had taken, in order to keep the people together, and preserve them in the Wesleyan body; that, had not such exertions been made, he believed the societies would have been scattered in every direction; that the people had lost no portion of their attachment to *real* Wesleyan Methodism; and that, as soon as an effectual barrier was placed against a recurrence of the evils of which they complained, they were prepared to reunite themselves to the body.

Mr. AVERILL was asked why he had not submitted to the decision of the district meeting and continued silent, instead of taking possession of the chapels, and agitating the societies? He replied, because he had been illegally suspended; suspended without a fair hearing, and without the sanction of any law of Methodism. "My conscience," added Mr. Averill, "God's word, and God's cause require that I should continue faithfully to discharge my duty, and I believe it better to obey God than man."

It was inquired why the case had not at first been brought before a district meeting?

Mr. AVERILL replied that they were credibly informed that the persons who would have composed that meeting had advised the adoption of the offensive measure towards the circuit of which they had to complain; and that, therefore, they considered it useless to apply for a redress of grievances to those who had advised their infliction. Mr. Averill then inquired of the President if he might not be allowed to answer to the charge of immorality; but he was not allowed.

Mr. Averill was then ordered to withdraw. On his return to the bar of the Conference,

The PRESIDENT said that his case had been fully considered by the Conference, and that it had decided that he had forfeited all right of appeal to them, and that the Conference had come to a *unanimous* vote that John Averill be expelled from the Body; adding, that he had violated the laws of the Body.

Mr. AVERILL said he had not; and insisted that the laws which it was alleged he had violated be pointed out.

The PRESIDENT named only one, which required that a helper should not oppose his superintendent.

Mr. AVERILL said that the President had quoted only part of the rule. It was added, "in the proper discharge of his duty," and he contended that in this sense he had *not* opposed him. He said that the decision of the Conference in his case was most unjust and cruel;—that they had come to a decision without hearing the case, or being in possession of proper evidence, on which to decide, and that the circumstances in which he had been placed were most singular and extraordinary. In the first place, he was found in the regular discharge of his duty as a Methodist preacher. 2. He saw his superintendent trampling under foot Methodist law and the rights of the people; bringing agitation and ruin on the circuit, and still he continued on neutral ground. 3. He discovered that such was the persecuting spirit of his superintendent, and the fearful position of the circuit, that he was required to pursue another course, and, for seeking the interests of Methodism, the glory of God, and the union of his church, he was expelled.

Here the clamour and noise were so great that Mr. Averill was unable to proceed.

The PRESIDENT intimated that he could not allow Mr. Averill to bring forward any thing criminating another person, but that, if he had any confession of guilt to make, he should be glad to hear it!

Mr. AVERILL said, I assure you, Mr. President, I have no such confession to make.

The PRESIDENT.—You are expelled forthwith, and are now required to withdraw.—Mr. Averill instantly withdrew.

## BIRMINGHAM QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—If the following report of the proceedings of our June Quarterly Meeting will serve the cause of Reform, it is at your service.—Yours, &c.

Birmingham, August 5, 1835.

A. B. C.

Friday, June 19th, 1835, was the day appointed for the Local Preachers' Quarterly Meeting in the vestry of Cherry-street Chapel. Mr. Waterhouse, superintendent, in the chair, supported by his four colleagues, Messrs. Slater, Duncan, Fish, and Bumby. After singing and prayer the chairman proceeded to call over the names and investigate the character, ability, &c. of the brethren. Several names were silently passed over, but at last he observed that he had passed over them because they were no longer members of our society, having joined the Association, and, of course, had left us. This observation gave rise to the following conversation:—

MR. T. JONES.—But, Sir, does it follow, as a matter of course, that those persons who join the Association dismember themselves?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—Certainly.

MR. T. JONES.—Suppose I were a member of Parliament, and were to join the Conservative Association, or, on the other hand, the Political Union, should I thereby dismember myself?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—Oh! we have nothing to do with political subjects here.

MR. T. JONES.—But the principle is the same, and it is but a matter of principle.

MR. FISH.—It is not a parallel case. Brother Jones ought to have known better than to introduce such a comparison. I will ask him one question, Suppose two clubs were established destructive in principle and operation to each other, would they suffer him to be a member of both at the same time?

MR. T. JONES.—Perhaps not. Then it is not because it follows as a matter of course, but because you will not *suffer* them to be members.

MR. DUNCAN.—It is morally impossible; the very object of the Association is to uproot Methodism at once.

MR. JACKSON.—If the objects of the Association are what Mr. Duncan has represented them, I cannot approve of them. But I must beg leave most respectfully to say, that at the meeting of the Association in this town (alluding to Bond-street) you did not satisfactorily, to my mind at least, answer the questions then put; and, Sir, I have to do with many respectable and intelligent persons, and I really feel at a loss how to answer them on certain points, I mean in reference to the exercise of our discipline. If a person is charged with a breach of rule at a leaders' or local preachers' meeting, and the charge cannot be proved, have you the power to expel him from the Society against the wishes or judgment of such meetings?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—No; there have been such instances, it is true, and in such a large body, constituted as we are, there always will be, but we claim no such power legally.

MR. SMALLWOOD, sen.—I will, Sir, if you will allow me, put the question in another form. Suppose a person to be charged with a crime, or breach of rule, at a leaders' meeting, and the leaders decide the man is guilty, have you the power to retain him in society?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—It is not the preacher that does either; it is the law that condemns or acquits him. I have only to put it into execution. A great deal has been said about a *supposed law* bearing date 1800, but it is no law; it is only an explanation of the law.

MR. T. JONES.—Is it a *correct explanation* of the law?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—No! It is an explanation of the law by some individual who did not understand it; and though published at the Book-room, yet they published, and sold for any body, and even for hire at that time.

MR. SMALLWOOD, sen.—But, Sir, suppose all the leaders were members of the Association except one, what would you do in such a case?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—Why, you know in that case I must refer to the *sound party*.

MR. T. JONES.—One other question I should like to ask. Supposing the person to be guilty or innocent, is it put to the meeting and decided by the majority?

MR. WATERHOUSE.—Why I have told you before. **Yes.**



Mr. T. JONES.—That, Sir, seems very strange: I cannot understand you. In the course of the meeting I asked if the law, or, as you say, the explanation of the law of 1800, were a CORRECT explanation, and the answer was, "No:" now, in answer to my question concerning the guilt or the innocence of the person charged being decided by the majority, you say, "Yes." How do you reconcile this with what you said before?

Mr. WATERHOUSE (evidently embarrassed).—You mean the legislative power, &c.

Mr. FISH (interrupting him).—I think, Sir, we have had enough of questioning and answering, and I beg leave to move that we proceed to the business of the day, and pray to God to give us more light and understanding.

Mr. JACKSON.—Sir, the advice is very good in a certain sense; but to give it in such a sarcaistical way, I think we are really undeserving of it, and it ought not to be.

Mr. FISH.—I beg pardon.

Here the conversation dropped; *three preachers* having been dispensed with without a motion before the meeting.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Well, to proceed, I am informed Brother S. Parsons, Brother S——, and Brother J——, are members of the Association. Brother S—— and J—— are not here. Brother S. Parsons, are you a member of the Association?

Mr. PARSONS.—Well, Sir, I have often said, and the brethren know it, that I never would answer in public any such inquisitorial questions: if you, or any one in the meeting, will call at my house in a friendly and Christian way, to ask me any question, I will endeavour to give an answer.

Mr. ROGERS.—I think brother Parsons ought to answer the question.

Mr. SMALLWOOD.—I think every brother is bound to answer any question.

Mr. VAUGHAN.—How is this? You had not used to think so.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Yes; but brother Smallwood has acknowledged to me his fault *like a man*.

Mr. SMALLWOOD.—I think it no disgrace to a man to acknowledge himself in a fault; and if I had the power, I would bring every man who refused to answer upon his knees. (A laugh.) The question was put in various ways, but Mr. Parsons still refused to answer, stating that his word was his bond, and as it was getting late he must retire.

Not many minutes after he had left the vestry a dreadful report was heard in the chapel, which being empty, it resounded as though a cannon had been fired off. This threw the whole meeting into confusion, and they flew as though a gunpowder plot was at hand. Suspicion immediately fell on the Association. But it has since been discovered that a few boys had fired off a pistol under one of the windows, which, being overloaded, smashed about 30 or 40 squares of glass. The meeting, however, reassembled, and Mr. Rogers, a renegade, moved that a special meeting of the local preachers be held next Friday, and that brother Parsons be requested to attend and give an account of his conduct towards this meeting. A deputation was appointed to wait upon the other two, and the meeting separated at a late hour.

Friday, June 26.—Mr. Jno. Jones, secretary, read the resolutions of the last meeting, after which Mr. Waterhouse inquired whether there were any communication from Mr. Parsons. The secretary said,—“I have seen brother Parsons, but I think his being here to-night is very doubtful, on account of his engagements. *He said he was not a member of the Association*, but he would not answer the question publicly. He seemed very tenacious about his word.” Others confirmed the above.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Then he has left since the last meeting.

Mr. DUNCAN.—It may be Samuel Parsons is *not now* a member of the Association, but he is with them *in heart*; and we cannot, therefore, play with men's consciences in that way.

Mr. T. JONES.—Brother Parsons thinks you have no right to ask him such a question.

Mr. DUNCAN.—We have a right to ask any thing.

Mr. STANDLEY.—All that I am afraid of is the publication of this meeting, for it is an impression on my mind that brother Parsons and the rest want us to expel them, and then they would publish it in the *Christian Advocate*.

Mr. DUNCAN.—Never mind; I don't care what they say about me.

Mr. ROGERS.—Sir, without losing any more time, I beg leave to move that brother Parsons be suspended till this day fortnight.

Mr. BEYNON.—I second it.

The motion was carried.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The next are the cases of brothers S—— and J——.

Messrs. Duncan, Standley, and Brittain, as the deputation appointed, gave in their report.

Mr. DUNCAN (chief speaker) said that they had waited on the two brethren, and one had acknowledged himself a member of the Association; the other said he would not answer the question to any body. He thought there was hope concerning friend S——.

Mr. STANDLEY.—You have forgot one thing, Mr. Duncan, about the President's letter.

Mr. DUNCAN.—Oh, yes. One of the brethren objected to that; and I told him that I had authority from the President to say, that he had never written, nor ordered to be written, any such letter; in fact, *there was no letter at all*.

Mr. T. JONES.—Do you mean to say that?

Mr. DUNCAN.—I cannot swear it.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Yes, there was a letter, but not like that represented.

Mr. STANDLEY.—I don't know what you can do with brother J——, without you turn him over to the leaders' meeting. If *we* can but *just touch* his membership——

Mr. WATERHOUSE (smiling).—Why, his joining the Association affects his membership.

Mr. SMALLWOOD.—I would object to that (that is, turning him over to the leaders' meeting;) we are a perfectly distinct body. But I think a little lenity ought to be shown to brother S. on account of his peculiar situation and his respectability.

A second deputation was then appointed to wait on both, and the meeting adjourned.

*Tuesday, July 7.*—In the former part of this meeting a great length of time was taken up in supplying the plans of the delinquents, afterwards there being no communication from Mr. Parsons (except as above) the meeting proceeded to judge of his case in his absence.

Mr. DUNCAN.—Will you suffer such a man as S. Parsons to trample you under his feet?

Mr. ROGERS.—I think brother Parsons has poured contempt on this meeting, therefore I beg leave to move that his name be erased from the plan.

Mr. JOHN JONES.—Although Mr. Parsons may have poured contempt on this meeting, yet I cannot see that his crime amounts to that which merits expulsion; we ought to be careful what we are about.

Mr. FISH.—If you do not expel him, he will say you *dare not*.

Mr. JOHN JONES.—Because a man says we dare not do a thing, it is no argument why we should do a thing that is wrong.

Mr. T. JONES.—Upon what ground do you move? Where is the law that warrants you in such a mode of procedure?

Mr. DUNCAN.—There is a law to which you pledge yourselves upon oath.

Mr. T. JONES.—Mr. Duncan speaks of a law to which we pledge ourselves upon oath. I wish he would show us the law, and explain the nature of that oath.

Mr. HATELEY, jun.—I should like to hear that.

Mr. DUNCAN.—When you entered into society you pledged yourselves solemnly to support Methodism. I did not mean a literal oath.

Mr. T. JONES.—When I entered into society I may have pledged myself to support Methodism, but I never pledged myself to answer any and every question that may be proposed to me irrelevant to Methodism, and that is the point. Can this meeting Methodistically and scripturally expel a man for not answering a mere question?

Mr. J. JONES.—Sir, it is a very hard case.

The motion, however, was urged by the mover, and without being seconded, was put to the meeting and carried by a majority of three.

Mr. T. JONES.—I tremble for the meeting. It has done a deed to-night for which it will have to give an awful account at the bar of God. It is no trifle to stop a man's mouth from preaching the gospel.

Mr. DUNCAN.—No fear of that. You have freed yourself.

Mr. T. JONES.—I have, thank God for that.

Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The other two brethren have joined the Association, consequently have left us.

Thus ended this piece of anti-British justice.

The Circuit Quarterly Meeting was held on Monday, the 29th of June. A motion was brought in by Mr. Peach, the purport of which was to eulogize the Conference and censure the Association. An amendment was moved to request Conference to *revise* and *explain* our standing rules for the better information, satisfaction, and tranquillity of the Connexion, and it was stated that there were many in the Association as pious and respectable as any in the meeting.

Mr. DUNCAN observed, "That rather than submit to any alteration in the constitution of Methodism, *he would burn his Bible and declare himself an Infidel.*" He pronounced the Association a faction.

A tale, however, is being told. They must soon alter the constitution or the constitution will alter them. March quarter day there was £12 in advance, but in June £9 in arrears. This looks as though our Birmingham Tories are tired of "coming up extra."

### JORDAN STREET ANNIVERSARY SCHOOL MEETING.

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

This meeting was held on the 16th ult., and was attended by a choice selection of the partisans of Methodism *as it is*. The prominent supporters of the system eagerly seized this opportunity of giving a new character to this annual assembly: and instead of the happy and peaceful tranquillity which distinguished it on former occasions, it was desecrated by the introduction of matters which ought not to be named before a promiscuous Christian assembly.

Mr. Sands, the chairman, found himself in a most happy situation, and, for once at least in his life, he was truly eloquent; and the subject on which he dilated must have been, of all others, to him most sublime and beautiful. The Wesleyan Association has called forth the display of talents of a most extraordinary character, and the speeches delivered that evening will be long remembered as specimens of elegance and refinement never perhaps before equalled.

The Chairman congratulated the meeting that certain men of base character had been driven away from the Society, as being only fit company for thieves and robbers; and, to make his assertion good, he stated that the superintendents and teachers of Leeds-street Sunday-school had stolen a whole library, worth about £80, which statement was assented to by the Rev. G. Marsden. Mr. Sands, however, found it necessary, in order to produce an impression, to suppress the truth of the case—for he did not tell the meeting that these books were the private property of the managers and teachers of the school, and even purchased with their money and for their own use and benefit: but, since the truth must be told, it appears that these bad people had determined to think for themselves, and had become members of the Association; and for this crime they were unceremoniously rejected from the school. Let Mr. Sands and his friends enjoy the benefit of the libel he has circulated against the character of men who, after all, may be as honest as himself. Does Mr. Sands forget that a member of the Association was his best friend? And the question is put to him whether he ever knew an instance of the occupiers of a house, upon being turned out of it, leaving their goods and chattels behind for the benefit of those who should come after them?

Another speaker, Mr. Chappell, from Manchester, took up the same subject, and told the meeting that there were a great many bad people of the same sort, in the place where he came from;—that they pursued the same nefarious practices, and they, too, were deeply involved in the guilt of stealing their own property; but for so doing they succeeded, at last, in expelling them. (*Thunders of applause followed this announcement.*) He recommended a strict observance of the conduct of the "Levite," in opposition to that of the "good Samaritan;"—for *he* would have no dealings with these wicked men, but would pass them by on the other side; for, said he, a common highwayman was an honourable man when placed in comparison with such men. Personal and party feeling now became manifest, and several persons left the room in disgust.

With the exhibitions of the evening no one appeared more pleased or satisfied than the Rev. Geo. Marsden; and, perhaps, his satisfaction might have been increased had an opportunity occurred to cause him to retire from the meeting to try, and expel, some offending brother—a circumstance which actually happened at a previous meeting of this kind which he attended at that place. Mr. Marsden adverted to the funds of the institution, by stating that Methodism would never want funds while we had our rich friends nobly coming forward to our help. Here he appeared to be in his element.

Mr. Atherton, a local preacher from the North Circuit, next addressed the

meeting,—and such was the originality of the terms in which his speech was couched, that fresh light seemed to flash upon the surprised audience in every sentence he uttered. It appeared that he had been reading Mr. Aitken's pamphlet in the course of the day;—for he told the meeting that "Methodism was not the creature of Mr. Wesley:" it did not want man to support it. This sentiment brought the opinions of the speaker and Mr. Marsden into direct collision; but Mr. Marsden thought it proper to deny the correctness of the conclusion. Mr. Atherton expressed his surprise that persons could be found silly enough to imagine that there was any thing imperfect in the government of Methodism,—for some men say the yoke of Methodism is an iron yoke—it was too heavy for them. Yes; and it broke some of their necks. For himself and friends, he stated that they had borne the *yoke* for some twenty, thirty, or fifty years, and it proved so easy that it did not even injure a hair of their heads, much less dislocate a bone in their necks, and they were determined to wear it still. The stolen library, like some evil spirit, still haunted the imagination of the speaker; and he prayed and implored the friends to assist them in purchasing books to replace those purloined from the Leeds-street library.

With respect to Leeds-street School, the facts are these. After the Day-school Committee, with the preachers at its head, in opposition to the appointment of the annual meeting, (the source of authority to both committees,) had taken upon itself abruptly to dismiss the Sunday-school Committee, and to assume to itself the sole management of the Sunday schools, five gentlemen were sent as a deputation to require submission from Leeds-street school, and to demand, as the teachers' first act of obedience, that they should depose their esteemed and excellent superintendents, because one of them happened to be a member of the Association, and the other friendly to its objects.

A teachers' meeting was called. The deputation were shown the illegality, the imprudence, and the ingratitude of such behaviour; and after long discussion between the deputation and the meeting, the former were asked what would be the consequence should the teachers not comply with their request. They replied, "*We will relieve you from your arduous duties.*" A motion was then made, "That, in consequence of the authorized and offensive interference of the Day-school Committee, this school retires, with all its privileges, from this to other rooms, until the present disputes being adjusted, it can return with honour." The motion was carried by an overwhelming majority, there being about sixty for, and only six against it.

The next subject was the Library. In reference to which it was explained, that the teachers having paid for it, had alone the right to it. The rule in the constitution of the Sunday-school Committee, which gave to the majority of the teachers the power to dispose of it, was then read; and it was resolved that it should follow the majority. It being the impression of the meeting, from the violent course the preachers and their supporters had adopted, that the doors of the school would be locked upon the teachers from that afternoon, and that whatever was to be removed must be removed there and then, about thirty of the male teachers in the presence of the deputation carried away the library on the close of the meeting; prior to which, however, the meeting consented that if the deputation would allow the *retiring* teachers a fair proportion of the Bibles, Testaments, &c., they would allow the *remaining* teachers a fair proportion of the library; which was refused.

The Day-school Committee had made themselves sure of the library, and their abortive attempt to seize upon the property of others has been, we fear, the only source of mortification to them in the matter. The loss of sixty teachers, it is to be feared, occasions neither them nor the preachers the slightest regret.

Upon the singular conduct of Mr. Sands we have only to remark, that however consistent vindictive persecution, malignant slander, and a disregard for truth may be in the advocate of a system of religious oppression, it is no part of the character either of a gentleman or a Christian to seek, upon such frivolous pretences, to blast the reputation of respectable individuals, nor, from extreme party feelings, to deprive an opponent in argument of his daily bread.



**MANCHESTER.**—Our readers will recollect, that at a very early stage of the present controversy, Mr. Greenhalgh was expelled, in the name of the Holy Trinity, by Mr. John Anderson. In addition to his long and valuable services as a leader and local preacher, Mr. Greenhalgh had been a zealous and persevering manager of an important Sunday school in the Grosvenor-street circuit. From this sphere of usefulness he was subsequently ejected by the arbitrary conduct of the supporters of Methodism as it is, but he was not to be diverted from his endeavours to benefit the rising generation. Accordingly, in conjunction with his zealous friends, measures were adopted for the erection of another school, and on Sunday last it was opened. The Rev. Dr. Warren preached in the morning, and Mr. David Rowland, of Liverpool, in the evening: Mr. Greenhalgh addressed the parents and friends of the children in the afternoon. Each service was overflowing: and in the evening a large congregation, unable to gain admission, was addressed outside by another of the local brethren. The collection amounted to £17 8s. 6d. The services at the Tabernacle were crowded to excess. The Love-feast, conducted by Dr. Warren, was a delightful scene; upwards of 2500 persons were present. We understand that two other schools, on a large scale, are nearly finished—one to be opened on Sunday next by Dr. Warren and the Rev. J. Lamb. Two additional Tabernacles are to be built.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**THE PEOPLE AND THE DELEGATES.**—The people every where respond to the call of the delegates. At the public meetings held in Liverpool, Sheffield, Manchester, and other places, detailed reports of which our limits prevent us from inserting, resolutions were unanimously passed, expressive of unalterable determination to oppose the injustice of an arbitrary and irresponsible Conference, and to adopt measures best calculated for the recovery of their undoubted rights. We found it totally impracticable to do any thing like justice to the debates of the delegates at Sheffield, in so small a work as the *Lantern*, and prefer omission to an unfaithful abridgment.

**To T. G.,** who suggests that we should give some clear and express definition of the requirements from those who may feel disposed to join the Wesleyan Methodist Association, with an exposition of its principles, rules, &c., we beg to say that the resolutions passed by the Delegates at Sheffield, will appear, in a few days, in another form, as "Minutes of the Delegate Meeting," together with abstracts from the mass of communications received from various circuits. In the meantime we apprise the members of society connected with the Wesleyan Methodist Association, throughout the kingdom, that they can be accommodated with society tickets by applying to the Rev. James Lamb, Liverpool.

**S. K.** is received. We agree with him that the conversation which took place at the class-meeting in St. Vincent-street, on the 19th instant, between Mr. G. Leigh and Mr. Essler, is an apt illustration of the fact,—that Conference considers adherence to its discipline of greater importance than the spiritual improvement of the people. Mr. Essler, formerly a member of Mr. Leigh's class, was not permitted to join in prayer, because he had become a member of the Association!

The verses, consisting of 120 lines, on the agitated state of Methodism, possess considerable merit. We regret that the nature of our plan, hitherto strictly acted upon, precludes their appearance, at least for the present, in the *Lantern*.

*Theophilus*, in type, is unavoidably postponed till our next.

We will endeavour to find room for *A Minister of the New Connexion*, in our next. *A Leader—Amicus*, and *S. S.* shall be attended to.

**An Inquirer** requests us to explain the celebrated Leeds case. We have frequently commented on that nefarious transaction, and Mr. D. Rowland has made it a prominent feature in his speeches. It cannot, however, be too well known, and we shall briefly repeat it for the satisfaction of our correspondent. A few trustees and others wished to have an organ in Brunswick Chapel. The superintendent was applied to, and he recommended the proper course, namely, an application to the leaders' meeting. A large majority decided against the proposal, and according to Methodist law the question was set at rest. But the organ party were dissatisfied; they had interest with the preachers, and acting as advised by authority, they applied to the district meeting. Here they met with a second defeat. An application was made to Conference, and Conference in contempt of these two decisions, and therefore in opposition to its own laws, granted leave for the erection of the organ. In consequence of these infractions of the law, and this invasion of the peoples' rights, disorders began to prevail in the Leeds societies. Irregular meetings were held. These the people justified by the illegality of their opponents' measures, and the only object proposed by them was to gain time for an appeal to the Conference. Overtures made on the part of the people were rejected. Unqualified and immediate submission was required. This being impossible, the authorities are appealed to, a conclave assembles, none are allowed to vote but such as had, in writing, signified their adherence to the priestly party, and one thousand members accused of no act of immorality, whose sole crime was their having dared to complain that Conference had broken its own laws; one thousand members, of whom twenty-eight were local preachers, and thirty-five leaders, were, without the least attempt at conciliation, cut off from a connexion which was dear to them, and excluded from places of worship which they had helped to erect.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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## THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST MAGAZINE.

It would not be a difficult task, if it were necessary, to demonstrate the truth of the remarks, in previous numbers of the *Lantern*, on the character and conduct of Conference, from the pages of their own *Magazine* just published. The number for this month shows the folly of expecting any material change to emanate from the Conference; and the determination of the dominant party to offer no concessions worthy of acceptance, to continue in their old spirit to suppress truth, mistate facts, and to brand the members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association with opprobrious names. The people, therefore, have nothing to do but to persevere with activity and zeal in carrying into execution the plans agreed to by the Delegates, and they will eventually succeed in casting off Egyptian bondage,—for the many never yet waged holy warfare with the few but they conquered in the end.

It might have been supposed that the official organ through which the sentiments of Conference are, or ought to be, conveyed to the people, would have given some information on topics connected with recent or passing events so generally interesting to the Methodist public,—at least a brief and impartial account of the disputes existing throughout the Connexion, so as to enable its readers to form a correct opinion, might have been expected at a period so momentous. But no; nothing of the kind. “Though the Conference expresses an *opinion* on such subjects, *leave* is not given to the people to *think* the contrary.” What have slaves to do with the laws but to obey them? Now, mark! Not a syllable is suffered to transpire in reference to the nature of the grievances of which thousands and “tens of thousands” justly complain. Of all the acts of oppression committed by superintendents—of all the illegal expulsions during the last twelve months—and of all the petitions and remonstrances sent to the President, and to the Conference—not the slightest notice is taken. Nay, even the letters of the delegates are totally suppressed. No information is given as to the circumstances which induced Messrs. Emmett and Averill to adopt that line of conduct in defence of the people’s rights which reflects upon them the highest praise, and, as a matter of course, brought upon them the direful vengeance of Conference. Dr. Warren’s case is passed over in silence. The Doctor’s name is not even alluded to, unless, indeed, it be in the following sentence, so strikingly illustrative of the most heartless and disgraceful “spiritual despotism” of the age in which we live:—

“Against three individuals who had rendered themselves conspicuous in the late agitations, the Conference, *as in duty bound*, passed a unanimous sentence of exclusion. When men, sustaining the sacred office, so far lose sight of their true character and obligations, as to become the apostles of discord, and the open revilers of their brethren, thus *leading to perdition* the souls which they ought to

save, they justly forfeit that official sanction which they had previously received. He who bids such men 'God speed' is a 'partaker of their evil deeds,' and must ultimately share in their guilt and punishment. The attempt made by these unhappy men to justify their unholy proceedings, was exceedingly lame and unsatisfactory, and presented sad proof of the evil influence of *unsanctified controversy* upon minds once pure and upright."

"Unsanctified controversy!" Hear this, ye *Reverend* editors of the *Illuminator*!

Speaking of the Delegates, the editor is not a whit less scurrilous and insulting:—

"The public have been long told that, during the sitting of the Conference in Sheffield, there would be a numerous meeting, in the same town, of persons connected with the self-styled 'Grand Central Association,' who would demand of the Conference extensive alterations in the discipline and order of the Connexion. Accordingly, dissatisfied persons, favourable to their projects, were invited by advertisement to assemble, in the hope that their number might intimidate the Conference, and induce that body to betray the trust which Mr. Wesley had confided to them for the benefit of the societies raised up by his instrumentality.— This notable scheme, though announced with great pomp and confidence, was a complete failure. Neither the number nor the character of the parties was such as to make any serious impression, either upon the Conference, or the society in Sheffield. *Several of the men had been expelled for misconduct*; and some of them had not, for many years, been connected with the Wesleyan body. *It was apprehended that some of them, at least, considering their former practices, would proceed to acts of violence*; but this proved to be a mistake!! Soon after their assembling, they applied to the Conference for a personal interview, which, *of course*, was declined; the applicants having forfeited all title to confidence by the unmeasured abuse which they had for months heaped upon the body of Wesleyan ministers, regardless of truth, and even of the decencies of life. The attempt to practise a *fraud* upon the Conference, by assuming the name of 'Wesleyan Delegates,' and avoiding all reference to the 'Association,' to which they, in fact, belonged, was easily detected, and justly exposed by the Conference in the answer which was transmitted to them. When the self-appointed 'delegates' learned that the Conference would not recognise them, either under that or any other character, because of their connexion with the notorious 'Association,' after holding one or two noisy public meetings in Sheffield, for the purpose of abusing the Methodist preachers, they retired from the town, and left the Conference to transact its business in peace and quietness."

Here, indeed, we have abundant proof of the evil influence of "unsanctified controversy." But this is nothing new in the Book-room. We have often had occasion to observe that from the moment a man ventures to dissent from the opinions of the dominant party, his private character is aspersed by hirelings, "regardless of truth, and even of the decencies of life." Hence the dark and malignant insinuations that some of the delegates had been expelled for immorality, and that Conference were apprehensive of acts of violence! "Weak inventions of the enemy," on a par with the assertions that the delegates were self-appointed, and attempted to practise a fraud! But it is useless to comment on such a tissue of worse than Popish arrogance, falsehood, and malignity.

Our readers will recollect that the ex-President, instead of consulting the delegates, a course which he would naturally have taken had any intention existed to do justice to the aggrieved parties, called together "some few followers of his own," whose views and wishes, it was pretended, were a fair representation of those entertained by the Connexion at large. These men were not deputed by any meeting of Methodists; they represented no constituency, but were the mere creatures of the preachers. Now the law of 1796, if still operative, must apply to the preachers as well as to the people. That law says "let no man"

[what a law to be acted upon in England in the nineteenth century !] "or number of men, circulate letters, call meetings, do or attempt to do any thing new, till it has first received the approval of *Conference* !" It was well observed by Mr. Hughes, of Manchester, that preachers who insist upon the operation of this law, render themselves liable to expulsion from the body. In a speech delivered at Sheffield, reported by the *Christian Advocate*, we find the following passage :—

"He, (Mr. Hughes) asked the Rev. T. Powell if he had not signed a certain declaration in company with 840, he would not call them *pastors*, but *masters*. Mr. P. admitted that he had. Then, said Mr. Hughes, I ask the reverend gentleman whether it was a *new* thing or an old thing for eight hundred and forty jurors to prejudge a case before they had heard the evidence. He would also ask him whether it was a *new* thing or an old thing, for 80 laymen to have been convened in the town of Sheffield, to meet the President and part of the preachers in Conference, on the subject of the late agitations, without such meeting having been first appointed by the *Conference*? Had that meeting been appointed by the Conference of 1834? But, added Mr. Hughes, I charge the rev. gentleman present, with doing that for which many of my brethren have been expelled—*attending an illegal meeting*! This last most palpable hit called forth several rounds of applause, whilst the rev. gentleman answered not a word."

Thus the ex-President clandestinely drew together about eighty individuals subservient to the preachers; and hence the affected "surprise" of Conference, so Jesuitically expressed in its final reply, at the appearance of the "Wesleyan Delegates." On this point we quote from the "Appeal of the Delegates :"—

"Where is the occasion for 'surprise,' on the part of the Conference, if, among the thousands unjustly and cruelly expelled from the society, their voice should never have reached the ears of Conference, when those very superintendents who have expelled them frustrate their appeal, by representing the appellants as not being members of Society, and when the 'paternal ears' of Conference are ever open to such representations from the preachers, against an appeal from the people? Where is the wonder, when the only legal method to which members of Society can have recourse to make known their grievances is prohibited, if the Conference never hear their complaints? and especially when it has determined to close its 'paternal ears' against complaints coming in any other way, because they are said to proceed from 'illegal' associations? Whether the unjustly-expelled members having had recourse to such methods of making known their sufferings, in such circumstances, was the 'reverse of those which are fair, open, and manly;' whether, if they were so, the whole blame does not lie at the door of Conference agents, who had left them no other alternative; and whether the Conference has acted the part of *Christian pastors*, or even of *prudent men*, in refusing at least to *listen* to their complaints, let the impartial public judge."

"Next to the above 'weighty objection,' is one declared by the Conference to be '*altogether insurmountable*;' namely, their being brought into contact with 'such a plan of *confederated* delegations' as that which presented itself to them.—How this obstacle should be altogether insurmountable to such superior wisdom, and such boundless resources, as are claimed by 'Methodism as at present constituted,' when a similar one was so easily surmounted by Methodism as it was in 1795 and 1797, is somewhat difficult of apprehension, except on the only assumption, that, notwithstanding the vast superiority which present Methodism boasts, it is immeasurably less powerful, and less skilful, than it formerly was. The Methodism of former times found it easy, and perfectly 'consistent with the maintenance of Christian order, edification, and peace,' at once to listen to such 'confederated delegations,'—ay, and to yield their claims too. Had but equal prudence and equal piety guided the counsels of the present race of preachers, as those which characterized the Conferences of 1795 and 1797, the peace and unanimity which they effected would not now have been disturbed by the violation of that constitution which they conceded to the people. Nor need the present Conference entertain the hope, for it will be vain and delusive, ever to allay the agitation which *they* have occasioned, but by retracing their steps, or by forming a constitution still more rational and scriptural than was once thought to exist in the Plan of Pacification of 1795, and the concessions made at Leeds in 1797, but



which a recent discovery has proved to be a *nonentity*, by their not having been entered in the Conference Journal at the time, which entry is essential to give them the force of law.

"The Conference having taken 'a calm review of various circumstances,' proceed to lay before the delegates and the public the wonderful discovery which has recompensed their careful investigation. They have actually detected, by comparing dates and public documents with the utmost nicety, that the "delusively termed meeting of Wesleyan delegates" is in reality connected, both in counsel and operation, with the members of the Grand Central Association itself! Why, it was never attempted to be concealed, that both the one and the other were identified in the general purposes for which they were called into existence. None, surely, but the 'calm reviewers' in the Conference, would ever have suspected any attempt at 'delusion,' in what had been openly avowed in almost every possible manner before the whole world. If such a laborious process was necessary for that reverend body to detect what all the world besides had known long before, it is sufficiently obvious why *Conference legislation* has lately been the sport of the nation before a competent tribunal, for the equivocal, absurd, or crafty rules by which preachers may easily become the 'victims' of a faction of their brethren, and the people be deprived of rights and privileges conceded to them in the most solemn manner by the Conference in former years."

Agreeably to ancient *usage*, Conference boasts of its delightful unanimity. It has "the *unspeakable* satisfaction of assuring its *beloved* societies, that, during its present assembly, an *unexampled* and most delightful unity, both of judgment and affection, has prevailed among the preachers on every subject that has yet come before them." We, also, happen to know something of the sentiments of the preachers, as well as Messrs. Newton and Bunting, and can assure the Reverend fathers that they were never more egregiously mistaken, and that is saying a great deal.

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The truth of the following spirited remarks, from the pen of an able writer, will be felt and acknowledged by the pious and impartial:—

"Our fears of the probable effects of Methodist influence are much abated by knowing that a change is going on in the Methodist community. Liberal principles are gaining ground in the minds of many. A determination to defend and multiply their actual liberties not a few have manifested. Discontent with the present state of things is widely spreading. We wish all such God speed. No cause is dearer than the rights of man; none more holy than the liberty where-with Christ has made all his followers free. Let those who are justly discontented be true to this sacred cause. Let them be strong, and quit themselves like men. In bondage, they may be sure, true religion cannot flourish. To be pious, men must be free; freedom and piety are twin-sisters; they are born of the same parent, nursed of the same sincere milk of the word, and they pine and die if permanently separated. Their language to each other is that of Ruth to her mother-in-law,—'Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.' On account of this indissoluble union we esteem liberty before all other things, and on the same account we have a lasting controversy with the rulers of the Methodists. We forgive them every thing—all their extravagancies; but their wounds on liberty we cannot forgive. These, together with the weapons by which, mainly, they have inflicted them, namely, pious frauds and holy horror, are our perfect abomination. Let the virtuous indignation that is now kindling in the Methodist community rise to a loud and yet louder note. Those who feel it have but to resolve to be free, and who or what can withstand them? Let them expand their views—there is need; let them emerge from their former darkness, not partially, but to the full and perfect day; let them grow, and speedily, into the full proportions of men in Christ, and myriads after them will rise up and call them blessed. The day is auspicious to their exertions. The power of the Conference is on the wane. In the very symbols of their greatness are seen elements of their decay. They won their way to extended dominion by unpretending and unadorned simplicity. They are losing their hold on the people's minds, and their means of swaying the people's affec-

tions by the pomp and splendour which they affect in their forms and places of worship. They are challenging a contrast with the Establishment, which will prove their bane, and they are subduing their original fervour, and veiling, with gaudy coverings, their original plainness, by which they are hastening on their own dissolution. As preachers, anxious to lead men from sin to God, they were irresistible in their appeals to the people; but as 'pastors,' as a 'distinct order,' as 'possessing inherent rights,' as governing *jure divino*—with the much affected prefix of *Reverend*, as a body of men caballing for the fattest stalls, and seeking the flock for the fleece, as 'men of learning,' and lovers of splendour and power more than of God, they will find labour enough to hold the ground they have gained, and would do well, if they wish to avoid disappointment, to renounce all hope of largely extending their empire. 'I read church history,' says Calamy, 'and could not help observing, with many others that have gone before me, that as the fondness for church power and pomp increased, the spirit of serious piety declined and decayed among those that bore the name of Christians.' This result, and its natural consequence, decline of numbers and resources, would even now have been observable to a greater extent than it is, had it not been for the disinterested labours of the local preachers and of the lay instrumentality generally, which, nevertheless, the 'pastors' underrate, not to say condemn. We ask, then, if any other body in civilized countries are so priest-ridden as are the Methodists? And by Methodists we mean, speaking in general terms, not only the people, not only the local preachers, but also no few of the itinerants. Why tolerate such assumption? Why suffer under so slavish a degradation? In becoming Methodists have they ceased to be Englishmen? Is it needful to be a slave in order to be pious? Are the itinerants who are not debauched by a participation in the despotism so wedded to the craft, so blind to their rights, so deadened by servitude, so fear-stricken at the presence of their masters, so fascinated by hopes of preferment, that they have not a heart nor a hand to unseat the lordling priests, and establish a government that shall place all the itinerants on a footing of equality, and secure to the people their undoubted rights?"

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#### APPEAL OF THE DELEGATES ASSEMBLED AT THE SHEFFIELD CONFERENCE, TO THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

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We regret that our limits prevent us from inserting the whole of this very able and powerful appeal, which is couched in language as elegant and forcible, as the arguments are convincing and unanswerable.

We are obliged to omit the introductory part containing strictures on the reply of Conference, the substance of which, however, we anticipated in our twenty-first number, page 334; and confine ourselves to the address to the "Preachers of Conference," and that to "Christian Brethren."

In the present state of things, the path which the President ought to pursue with a view to the welfare of the Connexion is manifest. If the preachers wish to regain the respect of the people, they must loosen the reins of their government. Let Conference venture no further; it is the last drop which causes the cup to overflow. Let it abandon all Jesuitical dealings, and all forced constructions of law. Let it abate of its priestly notions, and abandon its political schemes. Let the priest sink into the brother; it is a more honourable and a more endearing relation; and, as brethren, let those who are now rulers in Israel treat with the people in a spirit of Christian equality. Thus may the Conference retain all the influence which it ought to possess, and still carry forward, to the satisfaction of good men, the great work which its Founder began.

#### PREACHERS OF CONFERENCE,—

Can such counsels, can such dispositions, can such conduct as you have lately manifested, be of that God whose ministers you profess to be? Do they at all

assimilate you to that "good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep?" who so tenderly "gathereth the lambs with his arm, and carried them in his bosom?" who "left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and went after that which was lost, until he found it?" In your case, without any impeachment of their moral or religious character; nay, on the contrary, with the testimonials of the whole church, of their piety, consistency of conduct, and zeal for the promotion of the glory of God,—on the pretence of violating certain points of discipline in "Methodism, as at present constituted," you scatter those sheep which had been gathered with so much care and labour, (not your own,) and drive them from the fold, as though they had dishonoured their Christian profession by the basest crimes, or committed "the sin against the Holy Ghost!" the head and front of whose offending is, their bearing a conscientious testimony against your anti-scriptural assumption of power; your lordship over God's heritage; your violation of the most solemn compact between you and the people; your reckless expulsion of your own ministers, as well as of the people, without any attempt to effect reconciliation, or even permission to approach you in order to state their grievances! Well might one of your most distinguished preachers, lately deceased, represent your system of government as having "a radical defect," and fraught with the most perilous consequences! Describing the exemplary character of an individual, whose memoir he was writing, THE REV. RICHARD WATSON thus proceeds:—"He understood, as well as any, the principles upon which a church should be governed, and the rights that they, as Christians, had to maintain. He discovered a *radical defect* in the old system (i. e., of Wesleyan Methodism;) a power *assumed*, not *delegated*, and exercised without limit and without accountableness. A power which, in the hands of infallible virtue, would have produced the most beneficial effects, but, in the hands of fallible men, is often made the instrument of *degradation* on the one part, and the support of *illegal and unchristian authority* on the other."

Posterity will scarcely credit the record, that, in the nineteenth century, in a country renowned for intellectual superiority, for civil and religious freedom, for every thing noble and generous in sentiment, and liberal in its institutions,—that in *Britain*, in the very bosom of this free country, can be found a system of tyranny, under the profession of religion, beneath whose deadly shade one of the most pernicious shoots of the worst age of Popery has been rapidly growing up! The almost sole circumstance left for gratulation among your preachers assembled in the present Conference,—that of your boasted *unanimity*, as in your late expulsions, your *ministerial murder* of your brethren! is, to every discerning and thoughtful person, the deepest stain on your honour, the most fearful proof of your total corruption! Your unity is inspired by the genius of terror; your peace is the solitude of the desert!

You have, indeed, called to your aid a number of individuals whom you affect to represent as uttering the sentiments and views of the great mass of *the people*; that they are perfectly satisfied with things as *they are*; that they are desirous of no change—no improvement in the administration of "Methodism as at present constituted." But they are the representatives of *the few rich*, rather than of the poor. More correctly still, they are nearly the aggregate of that class of persons on whom the Conference think they can rely for pecuniary support, independently of the contributions of the poor and middling classes of society; by means of whose largesses you think you can carry out your plans of subduing every body, and every thing, to the absolute will and pleasure of a small faction in the Conference, and a few rich men out of it! Let not the great body of the preachers, let not even the few who fawn upon and flatter their wealthy supporters, be deceived! Those who are now so lavish of their gold, have accurately calculated the quantum of *power* they have purchased; which, if not duly yielded, will furnish occasion to the creditors to act the same part as one of old, who "laid hands on his "fellow-servant, and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me that thou owest!'" Thus will those of you, who have so readily been allured by the glitter of a golden sceptre, prove it to be no better to you than a rod of iron, to enforce in turn your own humiliation and disgrace! a state of things which will be the more culpable and mortifying on your part, as the danger was so accurately pointed out to you by our venerable father and founder, the *truly* Rev. John Wesley, in the following remarkable words:—"Let all preaching-houses be built plain and decent; but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable: otherwise the necessity of raising money will make *rich men necessary* to us; but, if so, we must be *dependent* upon them—yea, and *governed by them*! And then farewell to the Methodist discipline, if not doctrine too!"

Yet, though we thus speak; we know how to make due discrimination between the principal actors in the anti-Christian conduct which we feel it our duty to expose, and *those* who are unwilling instruments in the deeds of darkness which have lately been perpetrated; *those* who are merely awed into *silence* during this Methodistical REIGN OF TERROR!! and which silence is trumpeted forth as a delightful proof of your *unanimity* and *brotherly love*! Degenerate sons of such fathers as erst occupied your places! how long will you be permitted by Heaven to scatter flocks which you never gathered? to bear rule over God's heritage with a rod of iron? Are these the marks by which, as a body, you expect to be recognised as the legitimate pastors of Christ's flock? But we spare you; or, rather, we pity those of you who are subdued by the iron hand of oppression, and have neither independence enough to assert your own rights, nor virtue enough to advocate those of the people!

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,—

Our only, our last appeal is to *you*! We are maintaining a conflict of Christian liberty against tyranny, of righteousness against oppression. Determined never to yield to the anti-scriptural assumption of power which Conference preachers have employed against us, we set at defiance their utmost anathema, and securely place ourselves under the guidance of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the protection of the "SHEPHERD AND BISHOP of our souls!" But we ask, in the name of God, whether *you* can be satisfied with the measures which have been adopted against us; whether *you* think we have merited the treatment we have received at the hands of our preachers? Will *you* calmly stand by and witness your brethren and sisters by thousands thrust out from their lawful inheritance, from the consolations of Christian ordinances, from the advantages of Christian communion, without an effort to reclaim them? Will you allow an anti-Christian power, a persecuting priesthood, to wrest from *you* the last fragment of religious freedom, and fasten upon you a galling, an ignominious yoke of spiritual despotism? It is even *yet* in your power to rectify the abuses which threaten destruction to our beloved Methodism—the Methodism of a purer age. It is in your power—in your power alone, under the blessing of God, to arrest the progress of devastation and ruin which is rapidly advancing, and to restore peace and prosperity to a suffering church!

For ourselves we entertain no fear! Ours is the cause of truth and righteousness; the promotion of scriptural, rational, religious liberty! You may, indeed, amidst the general improvement of society, stand still; or, by a perversion of your moral powers, render yourselves insensible to the clearest evidence of truth, of uprightness, and of integrity; you may retrocede into the darkness of the middle ages, but the shadows of a deadly night have been rolled back from the great portion of the civilized world; the morning light has diffused itself over the moral hemisphere; the sun of righteousness is advancing with irresistible progress towards his meridian glory. Neither the crafty policy of the ambitious; nor the powerful coalition of the rich and the great against the rights of the people, can resist the progress of knowledge, and the prevalence of liberal principles. The eventful year on which we have now entered, will, probably, decide the momentous question,—Whether there remains within the great mass of the people who compose the Wesleyan Connexion, sufficient information correctly to appreciate their religious rights and privileges, and sufficient energy to assert them, against a rampant and ruthless domination, which sets at defiance all attempts to curb its exorbitant power; or, whether reformation shall be pronounced hopeless, except by the more tardy, but not less certain process of a gradual transference from the old body of all its valuable materials, for the reconstruction of a nobler edifice, whose foundation shall be as deep and as wide as the necessities of a universal church; and whose superstructure shall exclude all "the wood, and hay, and stubble," of merely human authority, and admit only "gold, and silver, and precious stones," such materials as will stand the strictest test of a *scriptural* examination now, and the last ordeal which it is destined to undergo, when "every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

To you, brethren, we refer the solemn responsibility of giving your consent, either by a careless indifference to what is passing, or by a timid acquiescence in the tyrannical expulsion of your unoffending brethren and sisters, from the bosom of a church which they love, by the pitiless denunciation of an exclusive Conference of preachers, armed with "irresponsible and irresistible power," sitting



within closed doors, guarded by inquisitorial sentinels, unapproachable by those members of society who humbly implore the privilege of a final appeal to that reverend assembly! To you, we repeat,—to *you* we refer the solemn responsibility of our excommunication, as you will have to answer for it, and as you desire to find mercy at the hands of your final Judge; since it is in your power, and in your power alone, (under God,) to *demand* our restoration, by making our cause your own; and by *refusing* (till Conference comply with your demand) to *countenance or support* so cruel and tyrannical an exercise of authority as that which has severed us from the body, and which now glories in its indisputed and absolute dominion over all who remain within the precincts of its jurisdiction.

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE DELEGATES.

Sheffield, August 6, 1835.

Perhaps the following resolutions will convey as much information in regard to the principles and rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, and of the requirements from those who may feel disposed to become members of it, as our readers will expect from the *Lantern*.

1. *Resolved*—That it be recommended to the friends of Methodist reform, in every part of our Connexion, not to unite themselves with any other religious body, nor to form themselves into any separate community, but to act in concert, and remain associated together until the next Conference, under the designation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association; the great object of which shall be to regain and effectually secure the rights and liberties of the Wesleyan community.

2. *Resolved*—That a Central Committee be appointed, which shall consist of all the officers in the Manchester and Liverpool Circuits connected with the Wesleyan Methodist Association; to which communications may be made on all subjects which may be deemed necessary by the District or other correspondents.

3. *Resolved*—That measures be adopted for the formation of a Branch Association, in the first instance, in every District, preparatory to forming one in every Circuit in the Connexion.

4. *Resolved*—That persons be deputed to represent, superintend, and further the interests of the Association in the respective Conference Districts; whose duty it shall be to correspond and exchange visits with other persons in the same Districts, for the purpose of holding public meetings, and circulating our publications throughout the various Circuits therein; and from time to time to report progress to the Secretary of the Central Committee.

5. *Resolved*—That a fund be established for the promotion of the objects of this meeting, which shall be under the management of the Central Committee, to which every Circuit united with the Wesleyan Methodist Association be respectfully requested to contribute, and that a Sub-Committee of Finance be appointed to take this subject under consideration.

The following Report of the Sub-Committee of Finance having been given in—

“The Sub-Committee appointed to take into consideration the state of the finances of the Association, and also to devise the ways and means for future operations, beg to report, that the most equitable mode of meeting the exigencies of the approaching year, would be to prevail upon the Delegates to pledge themselves to raise 2s. per annum from each member. The sum so provided is calculated to meet all the current expenses of the ensuing year, (including the balance due on Dr. Warren’s Chancery suit.) It is necessary, however, that this sum be remitted to the Treasurer by quarterly instalments.

“Your Committee beg further to observe, that, in case of a happy and successful termination of the proceedings of this Association, it is obvious that the whole of the above estimates will be unnecessary; but that still the first instalment will be needed to settle finally all outstanding accounts, rents for offices in Manchester and Liverpool, the legal expenses of Dr. Warren’s late suit, and to cover any loss that may be sustained by the publishers of the ‘*Lantern*,’ and other publications of this Association,”

*It was Resolved*,—That the Report of the Finance Committee now read be adopted.

6. *Resolved*,—That the Central Committee be authorized to engage and employ such additional Lecturers and Preachers as circumstances, during the next year, may require.

7. *Resolved*—That a Committee be appointed, to whom matters of difficult arrangement, relating to Chapel Trusts, and any other subject connected with the present state of the Connexion, may be referred.

That the following gentlemen, with power to add to their number, be the Committee for the ensuing year:—Mr. George Hughes, Manchester; Mr. William Smith, Reddish

House, Stockport; Mr. George Matthews, Manchester; Mr. William Wood, Manchester; Mr. Jabez Sanderson, Manchester; Mr. Richard Farrer, Liverpool; Mr. John Beynon, Liverpool.

8. *Resolved*—That in places where the regular Society Tickets may be refused, it is recommended that application be made to the Central Committee, for those of the Wesleyan-Methodist Association, that the people may be preserved in regular religious communion. That there be an effort to revive genuine godliness throughout the Connexion, keeping in diligent exercise the talents and piety of the Local Preachers, as well as those of every Member of Society, who can be thus employed.

9. *Resolved*—That the various Societies expelled, or the members of which may refuse to hear the preachers appointed by Conference, in cases where they cannot hire convenient places of worship, be recommended to erect temporary buildings of wood, or "Tabernacles," to serve them during the coming year; and that the Delegates be supplied with a Lithographed plan of such buildings upon the most feasible and economical principle.

10. *Resolved*—That, should any Circuit, during that period, require the services of a preacher, to be employed altogether in the work of the ministry, it is recommended that they communicate with the Central Committee on the subject.

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## THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

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The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for this month contains an article on the subject of the Institution, from which we extract the following. As an attempt to justify the Conference in establishing a Theological Institution without first consulting the people, in manifest violation of the laws of Methodism, it is a miserable failure; but its humorous satire on a very ridiculous and prevalent habit, from which even the theological tutors themselves are not exempt, may, in process of time, perhaps, be the means, if not of totally eradicating it, at least of producing beneficial effects.

"The preacher exemplified in his own case the deficiencies that cleave to those who, whether from neglect or other causes, have never received the advantages of at least moderate preparation for ministerial exercises. The sermon he delivered was by no means of an original cast; neither can I venture to affirm that it was remarkable for very extensive range of thought, or unusual closeness of reasoning; yet it contained many just and unobjectionable observations, delivered with an earnestness of manner likely to produce good impression; but the effect of the discourse, if not entirely ruined, was greatly weakened by a style of delivery so replete with inaccuracy and blemish, that, not only was the force of many tolerable passages destroyed, but the subject itself was lowered, by creating a feeling among the hearers bordering on levity, not quite unmixed with contempt. For instance: in quoting several beautiful texts, words in which the aspirate ought to be pronounced were deprived of it, by which means truth became nonsense. We were informed that, on a certain occasion, a man filled his belly with *usks*; concerning another ancient person, that 'the archers *it im*.' We were reminded of '*orses* swifter than eagles;' of some who fled to 'the *orns* of the altar;' of 'an *orrible* tempest;' the '*ouse* of David,' a 'bunch of *issop*,' and the '*ope* of the *ypocrite*.' We were then introduced to the nature of '*umility*, *oliness*, and *appiness*, and a notice of two relatives to the barley-*arvest*; to *eretics*, who were to be rejected after the first admonition; and to Jubal, 'the father of those who *andle* the *arp*.' Then, on the other hand, the aspirate was perversely intruded where it had no business. There was 'an *hopen* door' spoken of; several *hoblations*; lively *horacles*, and the '*helders* of Israel.' Besides which, 'Herod made an *horation*.' At last we arrived at the '*hends* of the *herth*.' Sundry provincial delinquencies were also perpetrated, much to the disadvantage of the speaker, the great grief of serious hearers, and consequent amusement of such as had not yet become so. We were given to understand, that every '*walley* should be exalted;' that worldly enjoyment is '*wanity* and *wexation* of spirit;' that 'the floods lift up their *woice*; yea, a mighty *woice*;' allusion was also made to those who '*wowed* a *wow*.' These samples might, but they shall not, be multiplied. Enough has been produced to show how injurious such defects are; and with what solicitude and earnestness every man, who stands up to teach the most important science ever known, should so convey his

instructions that not only should truth be delivered, but conveyed in terms adapted for general reception, and, at the same time, so as to protect the speaker and his theme from jeer and derision.

"There may, perhaps, be some few persons whose curiosity may prompt them to ask who the preacher is, to whom these remarks are applicable. Those who thus act will not inquire wisely. Like the writer of these lines, he cannot be known. The object sought here is not to indulge in personalities, but to remove mistake; not to create dissatisfaction, but to dissipate prejudice. Whether the sermon alluded to was delivered by the sea-side, or in a market-town, or the precincts of a city; whether in the far north or far west; on the Sabbath or a week evening; in a large chapel or a small one; are questions which the reader will be so kind as not to ask, seeing the thing is a secret. The facts are genuine and authentic; and 'further than this deponent sayeth not.'"

That few acquirements are of greater utility to those whose living depends on forensic, senatorial, or literary attainments, than an easy and fluent style of composition, as well as a correct and graceful elocution, is a proposition which none will be found to deny; and that this art can be acquired by studious practice only we freely admit. It is not, however, essential to the conversion of sinners, the proper business of Methodists; and it may be questioned whether many souls have been saved, or brought to repentance, merely through the instrumentality of sermons, the chief merit of which consisted in their grammatical accuracy. The defects complained of are peculiar to preachers educated at Woodhouse-grove, and a remedy can scarcely be expected from persons who acquired the rudiments of education in the same school, and now preside over an institution, the president of which cannot himself plead exemption from similar errors. Let one instance suffice. Dr. Bunting invariably says *hares*—instead of "heirs of salvation."

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#### ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

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[Continued from page 317.]

Sir, the great enemy of God and man well knows how to suit his alluring baits to the corruptions of our fallen nature, and it is natural to suppose that he has put forth all the insidious powers of his infernal malice to effect the overthrow of that "Methodism" which has formerly committed such dreadful ravages on his usurped dominions in this happy land. Nor are we mistaken in this conjecture. The old serpent well remembers the glorious conquests he has achieved over the churches of Christianity, from the days of "Constantine the great," down to the reign of William the Fourth of England, by means of those perishing baubles of *wealth, power, and popularity*, with which he baits his *clerical hooks*, when fishing specially for ministers of the Gospel. With these most irresistibly attractive baits his success has ever been, and still is, uniform, unbounded, and invincible! With them he catches "clergymen" of almost every denomination, by shoals; and either quietly *bags* them, or transforms them into his agents for the destruction of the congregations committed to their charge. These paltry honours are the "tinkling symbols and sounding brass" of clerical foppery; the "caps and bells" wherewith are decorated the heads and heels of those candidates for terrestrial glory, who mistake *power* for *piety*, *terrestrial wealth* for *spiritual prosperity*, and *popularity in the world* for *the praise of God*! In short, the men who suppose that this earthly "gain is godliness."

I beg to ask, do these "caps and bells" fit any of the *heads* of the "Wesleyan Methodist Conference?" They can be made to any shape or size; and as some heads are, beyond all controversy, intensely *itching for them*, there can be no doubt of their accommodation. How, then, are the mighty fallen, the weapons of war perished from our Zion, and the fine gold of the sanctuary exchanged for the tinsel of pride, and the bauble of power!

Sir, the governors of "Methodism as it is" being thus driven by their ambitious pride into an intimate association with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and

determined as they are to sacrifice all its remaining simplicity, humility, and holiness, at the shrines of those Gods of this world,—wealth, honour, and power, it became absolutely necessary to subdue the *obstinate piety* of its old members, who could not, without loud murmurs of disapprobation, see the walls of their Zion thus laid prostrate, and “the vineyard of the Lord turned into the devil’s common.” What, then, was to be done? “ECCLESIASTICAL DESPOTISM was the only instrument available for this purpose; and to that the Conference has, therefore, resorted with a vengeance! But, Sir, it is neither my intention nor wish, nor is it at all necessary, that I should here enter into a detailed recapitulation of those innumerable and flagrant instances of barefaced injustice, wanton cruelty, and despotic tyranny, which, for some past years, have marked the footsteps of Conference desolation, as it has trampled upon the rights of the people in its reckless pursuit of those forbidden objects. These have been abundantly detected, proved, and exposed, and their treachery amply displayed in the pages of the *Lantern*, in the columns of the *Christian Advocate*, in the Vestries of Methodist chapels, and in the public assemblies which almost over the whole kingdom have been convened for the express purpose of exhibiting, recording, and correcting those irrefragable proofs of the fall and corruption of modern Methodism. Two or three cases of public notoriety, however, I must advert to, as indisputable “overt acts,” establishing the impregnable truth of the “indictment” which forms the basis of the trial now at issue, and which will prove the delinquency of the culprit at the bar, beyond the possibility of refutation, evasion, or even *redemption*, without ample confession, deep repentance, honest restitution, and complete regeneration, on the part of the Conference towards an injured people.

The first of those acts is the flagrant omission of the Plan of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions of 1797, in the Journals of the Conference of those years, as providentially detected by Dr. Warren, pending the issue of his late suit in the Court of Chancery. The object of this omission is as palpable as its treachery is manifest and indefensible: the unholy perpetrators of this fraud well knew that by the despotic constitution of the Connexion, those Journals are the only records in and by which the equally despotic acts of the Conference can become the laws of that Connexion. Hence the omissions of those only *scions from the tree of Christian liberty* that were ever permitted to be *nominally* grafted upon the aristocratical plant of Methodism, was a surreptitious evasion of the promised boon; the illustrious *twigs* were secretly plucked off from the *upas of despotism*, and instead of the delicious and nourishing fruits of holiness, harmony, and love, behold the “bitter apples” of contention and strife, the “wormwood and gall” of “envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,” that can disgrace a Christian society, disorganize its arrangements, dissolve the bonds of its union, and extinguish the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit of God in the Connexion; all these are the horrid fruits of that unhallowed principle which dictated the excision of those salutary grafts from the degenerated plant, whose corrupted nature could not endure their effects, and much less amalgamate with their principle!

The second act of treachery and deceit which forces itself upon our observation, is that detected and exposed by Mr. R. B. Grindrod, of Manchester, and recorded in the *Christian Advocate* of the 16th of March, 1835. By this statement it appears that at the meeting of delegates at the Manchester Conference of 1795, the following rule was proposed to, and received and enacted by, the Conference, namely:—“But no leader or steward can be put out of his place but by a *majority of leaders*, or at a quarterly meeting: neither can any member of the society be excluded but by a *majority* at a leaders’ meeting.” Had this equitable and salutary rule been permitted to remain in existence and operation, none of the lamentable and heart-rending scenes of unjust and despotic expulsion, which have within the last few months disgraced the character of the Connexion, alienated the hearts of the people from the preachers, and shaken the stability of the body to its foundations, could have taken place. But it was not suffered to remain—for it appears, from the same statement, that in the Conference of 1800 it was surreptitiously altered; and, in a new edition of the “General Rules,” printed in 1808, by George Story, and sold at the City-road Book-room, by the Conference agent, and at the preaching-houses throughout the kingdom, the following modification of it was palmed upon the priest-ridden Connexion, and has been so continued to the present day: “No person shall be appointed a leader or society steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a leaders’ meeting. The nomination to be in the superintendent; and the approbation or disapprobation in the leaders’ meeting.” Here the word “majority” is suppressed; and “in conjunction with” substituted in its stead. Nor is there one



word said about the trial and expulsion of private members; by virtue of which piece of Conferential chicanery the preachers have been, by their own exclusive authority, cashiering office-bearers, and then expelling them, as private members, from the Connexion, by the despotic rule of *sic volo sic jubeo*, in hundreds of cases exactly as it suited the caprice, personal enmity, or detestable tyranny of the mighty despot who *ex officio* pronounced the expulsory sentence! I simply ask,—Is this a state of things to be endured in England by a community of British Christians, and in the present enlightened age of that happy country? Thank God, *it is not; nor shall it be endured much longer! The people must, and will, have their violated rights restored and secured to them.* Unless this be done, they will be compelled, in their own defence, and that of their sacred liberties, to establish another and a purer connexion, based on principles more congenial to the spirit of this enlightened age, and in conformity with the precepts and practice of the New Testament writers. To that connexion they will give a constitution, wherein wisdom and holiness shall combine with rectitude of principle, liberty of conscience, and freedom of speech, to secure its permanent tranquillity and never-ending prosperity.

In perfect unison with the two preceding acts of treacherous deceit are the audacious attempts to deprive the people both of their liberty of speech in their own popular assemblies and of that palladium of British liberty, “the freedom of the press,”—and finally closing the door of appeal, *hopeless as that appeal must ever have been in its issue*, against all complaints addressed to “their high mightinesses,” the members of the Conference! In support of these inquisitorial assumptions, the language of the preachers to individuals composing and officially acting in the leaders’ meetings, upon the introduction of any unpalatable subject, has usually been, “Hold your tongue, Sir, and sit down.” And to any obnoxious motion, “I refuse to put that question.” And to an attempt to lodge an appeal, “You have no right to address the Conference upon any such subject; and I most certainly shall neither receive nor forward such a document to it.” And in reference to the press, the celebrated Conferential mandate of 1796 runs thus, “Let no man, or number of men in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do any thing new, till it has been first appointed by the Conference.”—Thus have these despotic men arrested and chained down the hands, the tongues, the pens, and the types of the whole Connexion; nor would they suffer one of these to move in that Connexion, but as controlled or licensed by their usurped authority. Nothing but the spirit of Popery in religion, and West Indian slavery in civil society, ever equalled this consummate assurance of these haughty dictators, who owe their very existence as preachers to the bounty of the very men whose most sacred liberties they thus presume to trample under their feet! It is therefore high time for both “the stones and the timber” of the chapels to cry out; and that they will soon do so through their suffering representatives, THE UNFORTUNATE TRUSTEES, there can be little room to doubt.

Sir, the copious redundancy of this prolific subject compels me once more to pause in its prosecution; and, if permitted, I must once again trespass on your indulgence in a future number, for the purposes of briefly replying to some attempts at defence which have been made by the advocates of corruption in the periodicals desecrated by that cause; and then to suggest *a very concise, but most effectual remedy* for the fatal diseases which are rapidly pervading the vitals, and paralyzing the energies, of that Connexion which we all love too well to abandon it to its fate, without a powerful effort to save it from destruction.—Yours, &c.

Liverpool, July 6, 1835.

THEOPHILUS.

METHODISM AS IT IS, *supreme and infallible*.—At the last June quarterly meeting of a circuit not twenty miles from Liverpool, a respectable local preacher had the temerity to assert that the Conference system of government was not in accordance with the apostolic government. The indignant superintendent, however, cut short the presumptuous and ignorant local, and speedily upset all his arguments by asking,—“What have we to do with the apostolic government? We have to do with Methodism, not with the apostles.” Such profaneness is most revolting to every pious mind, and if the sentiment itself be not the very essence of Popery, we know not what is. The Conference party have only to cherish this sentiment, and very speedily they will have to write on the walls of their sanctuaries, in reference both to discipline, doctrine, and piety,—“The glory is departed from us.” We are in possession of the names of the parties, and unquestionable evidence of the truth of this statement.

## THE CONFERENCE ELECTIONEERING PLOT.

We have shown that the power assumed and exercised by the Conference is not confined to religious pursuits, but is universal as to the objects which it endeavours to promote. By struggling to advance political interests, it has driven from the Connexion many of its brightest ornaments. Its interference in favour of the abolition of the slave trade might be successfully vindicated on the ground of humanity as well as religious principles, but it was attended with this evil,—it afforded a handle, and has been cited as a precedent, for meddling on other occasions. On the question of the separation of Church and State, it in effect constituted itself a political union. It declared certain political opinions anti-Wesleyan. It enacted, in the case of Mr. J. R. Stephens, that the continuance of a preacher in the ministry depends upon his holding or not holding, declaring or not declaring, certain political opinions, contrary to the plain and express declarations which Mr. Wesley himself has made on the subject of Methodism. But what are we to think of the ambitious designs betrayed by the *Watchman*? Are “the rich few” to be recompensed by means of the elective franchise? Alas for the member-makers! They have no influence out of doors. Put Jabez himself in nomination at Leeds, Halifax, Stockport, or elsewhere, and any of the expelled would head the poll.

The *Watchman*,—a Tory journal, established by the Wesleyan Methodists of the Conference party,—talks of its being “highly desirable that the Methodists, now no longer an insignificant and unimportant body in the state, should have representatives of their own principles in the House.” This is all of a piece with the deep-laid schemes of the Conference despots; and has only to be exposed to public view, to have its objects thwarted, and its designs defeated. We do not object to Wesleyan-Methodist candidates, on account of the religious denomination to which they belong; for we could heartily support an upright Wesleyan, of enlarged views and liberal principles: but we must have no Wesleyan Tories, of the BUNTING and *Watchman* school.—*Halifax Express*.

We do not know what the *Watchman* means by requiring Representatives to whom the Methodists in particular “can look up as the guardians and asserters of their religious rights and privileges.” Happily, Methodists have no interest distinct from that of other denominations, especially of all sects of Dissenters. In no place are the Methodists more respectable than in Leeds; but we know, from inquiry, that they have never thought of selecting a Representative from among their own body here, and that they have no wish for any Member because he is a Methodist. We can tell the *Watchman* that the Methodists of Leeds, and of Halifax too, are generally stanch reformers, and that neither a Tory nor a Trimmer will be likely to find favour with them. We think the *Watchman* is a little misled by a wish for the aggrandizement of Methodism. But would political aggrandizement, would worldly honours advance the true interests of religion in that body (which is the object the *Watchman* professes chiefly to desire?) We doubt it. Riches and honours are coming fast enough to the Methodists: let them not be eager in the pursuit.—*Leeds Mercury*.

In its fearful anxiety to exculpate those who are so angry at the premature development of the plot, the *Watchman* has made additional disclosures, which leave no room for doubt, as to the time, place, and persons connected with this new political scheme. We refer to the two following sentences:—

“The conversations on this subject, to which we then alluded, were of the most casual and informal character; and nothing like consultation or plan has taken place in any quarter, so far as we know, for the attainment of the object specified.

“Those individuals who, we are sorry to learn, have in some quarters, where mere suspicions are too often admitted as facts, been supposed to be implicated in this matter, were totally ignorant, as we have good reason to know, of the article in our last number, until they saw it in our columns.”

Here, as plainly as two and two make four, it is conceded, that the matter formed the subject of conversation amongst those select preachers who remain together at the close of each Conference, after the multitude of the brethren have gone each to his own place; but that, though they had talked the matter over, they had no idea that it would be so indiscreetly bruited in their weekly journal, while as yet it was but in embryo.—*Christian Advocate*.

## PROCEEDINGS AT MANCHESTER.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY, ARBITRARY, AND ILLEGAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE, MANCHESTER SOUTH CIRCUIT, IN THE EXPULSION OF CONDUCTORS, AND CONSEQUENT RESIGNATION OF THE TEACHERS IN CHANCERY-LANE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Many false and slanderous reports having been industriously circulated through the town relative to the unhappy affair which has taken place in the Chancery-lane Sunday school, the teachers feel themselves imperatively called upon to lay before their friends and the public the following statement of the case, which may be relied on as being substantially correct.

In consequence of the feverish agitated state into which the Wesleyan societies have been thrown of late, by the extraordinary assumption of power on the part of the Conference and its supporters, and the misinterpretation of many of the rules by which the societies are governed, the demon of discord unhappily found his way into many of our peaceful, happy, and prosperous Sabbath schools, several of which, both in Liverpool and Manchester, have been scenes of unholy strife, dissension, and division. Conductors, in many instances, have been expelled from the institutions, for no other reason than because they had the resolution to avow themselves Wesleyan Methodist reformers. Conductors and teachers, in some schools, have been driven away from the children among whom they had successfully laboured for a series of years; and in others both teachers and children have retired with their expelled conductors.

In the abovenamed school there is a very excellent library of books, of about 700 volumes. This library is the property of the Sunday school, the conductors and teachers having established and supported it, made all laws for its government, and for the disposal of the books: altered, rescinded, and made new laws, from time to time, to meet any case of emergency which might occur; nor has any person or persons, up to the present period, attempted to dispute their right to do so.

A few weeks ago a report was extensively circulated that Mr. Souter, one of the conductors, and several of the teachers were marked out for expulsion from the school, owing to certain opinions and sentiments which they were known to entertain relative to the administration of certain parts of the Wesleyan discipline; and from what has subsequently transpired there is sufficient reason to believe the reports in circulation were quite true.

Knowing the fate of several Sunday schools from which the conductors had been expelled, and feeling persuaded that most of the teachers, as well as a large majority of the scholars, would leave, should such an unhappy event take place (witness George-street and London-road schools,) the teachers requested the conductors to call a meeting, at which some of them expressed their fears that the reports which they had heard relative to the expulsion of Mr. Souter and some of the teachers might prove correct; and to prevent the alienation of the library from the children a resolution was passed unanimously (with the exception of only one dissentient,) the object of which was to secure to the teachers and children of the school the use of the library, should the circumstances anticipated take place.\*

On the Tuesday following Mr. Anderson waited upon Mr. Souter, and required him to call the teachers together and rescind the obnoxious law. To this Mr. Souter objected, on the ground that neither the society nor the Sunday-school committee had any legal or Methodistic right to interfere with the library of the Chancery-lane school, unless the books were being taken away—an act (said Mr. Souter) *which I never will be a party to*. On the following day, at Mr. Anderson's request, Mr. Souter met four gentlemen to discuss the question, but they failed to convince Mr. Souter that the teachers had acted illegally.

A special meeting of the committee was called on Saturday the 4th of July, 1835, to which the conductors were summoned. Mr. Souter being in the country, sent the following note to the meeting:—

*"To the Rev. John Anderson, Chairman of the Wesleyan Sunday-school Committee.*

*"REV. SIR,—Having an engagement in Cheshire to-day, and fully expecting that the committee meeting will be held as usual on Friday evening, I fear I shall not be able to attend, except at a late hour.*

*\* The individual above alluded to (who was, as he himself stated, at the teachers' meeting, in the glorious minority of one) communicated to Mr. Anderson what had taken place; and he also furnished Mr. A. with a copy of the resolutions that were passed.*

"But presuming that the meeting is called on the subject for which I met the four gentlemen at your house on Wednesday morning, I beg respectfully to repeat what I stated on that occasion, viz., that I protest against any foreign interference with the library of the Chancery-lane Sunday school, unless the books were being taken away from the school, *an act which I have already said I never would be a party to.*

"When the library was first established, the school was not then *Wesleyan*, but a school for *'all denominations'*," and when the name was changed, objections were raised by some persons, who said that the library did not belong to a Wesleyan school, but to one of *'all denominations.'* This objection, however, was overruled by a majority of the teachers' meeting, who no doubt thought they had a right to alter the rules. In the present case no attempt has been made to change the name of the library, or remove it from its present local situation. I think, therefore, that the committee have no more right to interfere with the library on the present occasion than the persons had to do so in the case before named.—I am, yours respectfully,

"*Ardwick, July 4th, 1835.*"

"W. SOUTER.

When Mr. Souter's note had been read, and the subject duly discussed for some time, the following resolutions were agreed to, and a copy sent to each of the conductors:—

"At a meeting of the General Committee for conducting the Wesleyan Sunday schools in the Third Manchester Circuit, held July 4th, 1835,

"*Present,*

"Rev. JOHN ANDERSON in the Chair,

"Rev. R. Lusher, Messrs. John Marsden, Joshua Rea, Robert Henson, T. Townend, John Lomas, George Lomas, — Lomas, jun., R. Mayor, Richard Yates, William Burd, H. Cryer, — Potts, Charles Beswick, J. Hampshire, John Napier, and Joseph Marshall,

"The resolutions passed at a meeting of the conductors and teachers belonging to the Chancery-lane Sunday school, held on Sunday, June 28th, having been read, and Messrs. Souter, Simpson, and Scholfield having neglected to attend this meeting, the committee, after due deliberation, unanimously resolve,—

"1st.—That in the judgment of this committee the above-named conductors have been guilty of a gross dereliction of their duty in sanctioning an alteration in the rules of the school library, which gives to a certain portion of the conductors and teachers the power to alienate the library from the children of the Chancery-lane Sunday-school, for whose benefit, in perpetuity, the library was originally established.

"2d.—That Messrs. Souter, Simpson, and Scholfield be required, *and they are hereby required* to attend a meeting of the general committee, to be held in the vestry of Grosvenor-street Chapel, on Wednesday evening next, July 8th, at eight o'clock, to answer to the above complaint, which the committee are in duty bound, as the authorized guardians of the Wesleyan Sunday school in the South Manchester Circuit, to prefer against them.—Signed on behalf of the Committee,

"JOSEPH MARSHALL, Secretary."

On Wednesday evening, July 8th, at eight o'clock, the committee, according to appointment, met. The conductors who had the charges preferred against them, refused to attend the meeting.\* The following note will explain Mr. Souter's reason's for not attending:—

"*To the Rev. John Anderson, Chairman of the Wesleyan Sunday-school Committee.*

"REV. SIR,—I have received a note from the junior secretary of the Sunday-school committee, charging me with a gross dereliction of my duty in sanctioning an alteration in the rules of the Chancery-lane Sunday school library, and requiring me to attend a meeting of the committee, to be held in Grosvenor-street vestry, this evening, at eight o'clock, to answer to the above charge.

"For the gentlemen composing the committee I feel the greatest respect, and I hope I may not be considered as treating them disrespectfully when I state that as the object of the committee meeting is to interfere with the unanimous decision (with only one exception) of a conductors' and teachers' meeting of the Chancery-lane Sunday school, and as a great and important principle is involved in all such interference, I must beg respectfully, as a *Trustee and Subscriber to the Library*, to decline attending any meeting called for that special purpose. If the principle of interference be admitted, then the persons who objected to the name of the library being changed (as stated in my former note) from *'all denominations'* to *'Wesleyan'*, were right; and if you admit that they had a right to interfere, then it follows, as a matter of course, that the library is still belonging to a school of *'all denominations'*, and not to a *'Wesleyan' School*; so that interference on the part of the Wesleyan Committee is premature. Waving, however, all objections like the above, I am convinced that all interference is an infringement on the rights of the Chancery-lane Sunday school teachers, as much so as if the Committee of the schools of *'all denominations'* had attempted to hinder the conductors and teachers of Ormond-street Sunday school from transferring their library to the Wesleyan school, when they removed it to Oxford-road.† Should anything grow

\* One reason why the conductors objected to attend was—its constitution was illegal. The local secretaries are members of the committee, but they were not invited,—one-fourth should have been teachers, but not one was there, nor were any invited.

† The committee stated that the library belonged to the building, if there was only one scholar and one teacher in it, and yet these wonderfully consistent men removed the library from the Ormond-street and the Leigh's Buildings schools (both of which were not under the Wesleyan



but of the present affair to interrupt my connexion with the school, I shall, while I live, sincerely regret the result. A conscientious conviction that the present proceedings of the Committee are an infringement on the privileges of the teachers, is the only apology I have to offer for the decided position in which I have placed myself.

"I am, yours respectfully,

"Ardwick," July 8th, 1835."

"W. SOUTER.

The committee meeting to which the above note was addressed appointed a deputation of twelve gentlemen to wait on the conductors and teachers the following Sabbath. The subjoined is a copy of a note sent to each of the conductors on the subject:—

"SIR,—I am directed to inform you that, at a meeting of the general committee of the Wesleyan Sunday schools for the Manchester South Circuit, held on Wednesday evening last, at which the resolutions passed at a previous special meeting (a copy of which has been handed to you) were confirmed, it was unanimously resolved that a deputation from the aforesaid committee should meet the conductors and teachers of Chancery-lane Sunday school at three o'clock on Sunday afternoon next, the 12th instant. Your presence at the time and place above stated will be indispensable.—I am, yours respectfully,

"JOSEPH MARSHALL, Secretary.

"Manchester, July 11, 1835."

[To be concluded in our next.]

committee, but the All-Denomination committee—that is, a committee composed of persons of different religious sentiments) to Wesleyan schools. The teachers of the former at first refused to take their library to the Wesleyan school, Oxford-road, and they would only consent on condition that the friends of Oxford-road school would furnish an equal number of books to those transferred from the Ormond-street school. Thus they established a principle, and then in the character of members of the committee coerce the teachers of Chancery-lane Sunday school for having acted upon it. Will any person say that the object of these men was not to break up the Sunday school? This charge they have tried to fasten upon Mr. Souter, and the other conductors and teachers; but those amongst the committee who know most about the affair, know well that such a charge cannot be proved.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MANCHESTER SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—Having received the interesting account headed "Proceedings at Manchester" about our usual time of going to press, we were unable to do more than make room (by displacing some of our own articles) for the first part of it, and postpone the remainder (which is still more interesting) till our next. We observe that Mr. Souter has felt it to be his duty to resign his office as leader. On the Sunday morning after the expulsion of the conductors, they and the teachers met in an old dye-house near Ancoats-bridge. Before ten o'clock nearly 700 children, with about 60 teachers, were assembled together. Being destitute of books, the forenoon was spent in singing and prayer. Mr. Souter commenced the service by giving out an appropriate hymn, but could proceed no further, and for some time there was a solemn pause. Mr. Hardiman attempted to proceed with the hymn, but was utterly unable to go on; both teachers and children wept aloud. The scene that followed was deeply affecting. Had it not been for the lively interest which the teachers felt for the welfare of the rising generation, hundreds of children would have been thrown into the streets, and the consequences to themselves as well as to their friends and the public would have been fearful. But they knew "the value of the poor man's child." The result of Mr. Anderson's unhallowed violence will probably be an accession of a considerable number of his quondam friends to the Association.

*Inquirer* must be aware, that unless he favour us with his name and address, it is of no importance that he pledges himself to the truth of his communication. We have no desire to know the names of writers on general subjects when they think proper to conceal them, but we must decline noticing communications purporting to state facts, unless accompanied by the signature of the author.

The excellent letter of *Quis* is received, but we must postpone its insertion till a future opportunity.

If *An Observer* feels himself aggrieved, he has the remedy in his own power. When a bad cause is supported with bad temper, it is not uncharitable to conclude that the writer has some consciousness of the disgrace, as well as the difficulty of the task he has undertaken.

*A Minister of the New Connexion*, and *An address to the local preachers and to the people*, shall appear in our next. Want of space prevents our noticing several other communications.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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No. 24.

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## THE MINUTES OF CONFERENCE.

The Minutes of Conference have been published since our last number, and now lie before us. High-sounding and pompous claims to support have been so frequently made in favour of what has eventually proved unworthy of it, and principles, solemnly announced as the basis of the pretensions of Conference for that support, have been so often abandoned, that this new appeal of the ruling party from "*Methodism as it is*," to "*Methodism as it is to be*," even under the alluring title of "*Explanations and Improvements*,"—as certain resolutions, which virtually amount to a denial of justice, are whimsically enough styled in the "Special Address to the Societies in Great Britain,"—is naturally viewed by the people with jealousy and distrust. Nor ought this to excite surprise. Let the reader call to recollection a retrospection of the conduct of the preachers, especially superintendents, during the last few years,—we had almost said the last few months. A slight consideration of the subject will induce that opinion, which an impartial, broad, and comprehensive inquiry will unalterably confirm. When a new code of laws is found necessary for the government of a civil or religious community, the conduct which common sense and *usage* dictate is, for the parties mutually interested, or their representatives, if men of piety and truth, to assemble and meet together, in order to discuss and finally settle the matters in dispute. But who were the representatives or arbitrators in this case? Were they impartially and equally chosen? Not at all. A few partisans of one party only, the preachers, presumed to decide for all,—as if they themselves were constituted at once witnesses, judge, and jury. We are, indeed, pompously and repeatedly told, that the resolutions were *unanimously* adopted by the Conference. If so, what right has the Conference to make laws without at all, in any shape whatever, consulting the people? But did the preachers collectively, in point of fact, do so? No such thing. Such of our readers as are not conversant with Conference phraseology might infer that the falsely called "*Improvements*" were the result of the long and anxious deliberations of the preachers collectively on the several topics enumerated. The truth is, very few were consulted. Scarcely one in fifty knows any thing of the matter till the Minutes are published. The whole affair is mainly, if not entirely, concocted, ordered, and decreed by one ambitious individual, to whom all the rest are subservient. Above eight hundred preachers know no more of such affairs than they do of such electioneering plots as were exposed in the last *Lantern*. Let the members of the Wesleyan societies consider well the nature of the claims which are now set up by the haughty Conference. We earnestly and affection-

ately call upon those, (to use the language of the sleepy *Watchman*,) "whose simplicity has been abused by designing men, to open their eyes and allow themselves to be undeceived" as to the real character of the plans proposed to them. It is not yet too late. Let them continue in their present thralldom only a little longer, until the dominant faction get them fully under their power and rule, and they will then be made painfully to feel what many already clearly see,—that all the high-sounding professions of regard for the people, and zeal for their rights, in which the Conference faction indulge, have been only made to serve the purposes of ambition, and gratify their lust of power.

That a spirit of unexampled arrogance, malignity, and Jesuitism breathes through the whole of the Minutes, and fully justifies the picture we had previously drawn of the ruling party, must be evident to every one who will take the trouble to read them. In support of their monstrous pretensions, the last number of the *Watchman*,—a newspaper seemingly established to inform Missionaries abroad of the toasts drank by Sir Robert Peel at home,—exhibits the most disgusting cant, of which the following is a specimen:—

"The leaders, had they to 'rule,' at one time might be tempted to favour an individual to the injury of the *cause of Christian purity*, [as in the Leeds' case?] at another time they might be exposed to the opposite temptation of treating an individual *more harshly than his offence would merit*. [If he did not, like Mr. John Whittingham, subscribe to the yearly collection?] Among men engaged in commerce and trade, and who have extensive local connexions, the danger exists that the spirit of rivalry in business may creep in, and the effects of *family disputes* may be felt to such a degree as may, though *imperceptibly to themselves*, dispose the minds of even pious men to view the faults of an individual with *too little allowance of charity*. [As in the case of the Bealeys and the Buntings?] The people are, therefore, safer under the government of the preachers than they could possibly be in the hands of the leaders. The preachers, free from the temptations of *men of business*, [having nothing to do with Book-rooms?] are able to inquire into the conduct of a member, *without prejudice*, and in the full exercise of Christian charity. But more than this: the preachers take an interest in the welfare of the members which leaders cannot feel. Can any person have the same regard for the flock as the pastor of the flock? Does any one cherish the same *ardent affection* and *intense solicitude* for children as their parents? [Do parents expel unoffending children by thousands and tens of thousands?] The ministers of Christ regard the people as their spiritual children, many of whom they have 'begotten' in the Lord, and all of whom they are specially appointed to watch over and train for God and for eternity. And it is not likely that the people can be so secure in any hands as in those of their preachers, whose bowels yearn over them with parental affection, and who, in obedience to the Divine call, have *renounced the world and its pursuits*, and now *live only to watch over them*, to pray for them, and promote their spiritual and eternal welfare; [!!! renounced "Electioneering Plots?"]

With respect to the *essential principles* and *fundamental regulations* of their *established* discipline, Conference are unanimously and deliberately resolved to make no change whatever; of course, even in their own estimation, the Improvements classed under the three following heads, are of little or no importance, except as they strengthen and increase their ill-gotten power.

1.—FINANCIAL AFFAIRS.—On this subject says the *Christian Advocate*,—

"The sum of the new financial regulations is this, that the Contingent and Auxiliary Funds' Committees shall contain a mixture of laymen and preachers. But by whom are the lay-members to be appointed? In the case of the Auxiliary Fund, by the Conference; in that of the Contingent Fund, by the circuit stewards of those districts (how many is not stated) which may be nearest to the

place where the Conference will meet. But by whom are the circuit stewards appointed? In the course of the palaver by which the subject is mystified, the Conference attempt to persuade their dupes that they have now given them a security for the due appropriation and administration of all the funds to which those dupes contribute, and repel, as 'a calumny, the shameless assertion that their people have little or no share in the management of their financial concerns;' pretending to say, that being in the hands of men appointed, whether preachers or laymen, by them, or by those whom they appoint, they are in the people's own hands; and yet, withal, acknowledging the title of those who are contributors to be, by their representatives at least, distributors. To add to the offensiveness of this mockery of a concession, the Conference have the modesty to claim for themselves, that the various funds are 'principally obtained' by them, which they assign as a reason why 'it would not be equitable or reasonable' to take them out of their hands; while, soon after, they affect to say that 'most gladly would they be exempted' from the 'onerous' labour of fingering the cash! If they were honestly desirous of giving the people a control over the funds, they would leave the appointment of treasurers and committees to them. But that would be the next worst thing to stopping the supplies."

2.—EXPULSION OF MEMBERS.—We quote the following spirited and judicious remarks from the *Christian Advocate*:—

"The Conference admit that the fair construction of the phrase 'proved at a leaders' meeting,' in the law respecting the expulsion of members, is 'proved to the satisfaction of the leaders' meeting;' but this rule, they add, applies to the cases of members 'who demand a trial' before that tribunal; for, they state, if a preacher be of opinion that any member ought to be excluded, he has only to withhold his ticket and erase his name from the class-book! The province of the leaders' meeting, when appealed to, is thus stated:—

"If a majority of the leaders, who vote at the meeting, shall be 'satisfied' that sufficient proof is adduced to establish the fact of a wilful and habitual negligence, or of the violation of some Scriptural or Methodistical rule, and shall give a verdict to that effect, then the leaders' meeting has discharged its whole part of the painful duty to be performed, and the case is left in the hands of the superintendent. On him devolves the sole right and duty of deciding on the measures to be adopted towards the offender, in consequence of the verdict thus pronounced. He must prayerfully form the best judgment he can respecting the nature and degree of the ecclesiastical penalty most fit to be inflicted; whether censure or reproof, in private or in public,—temporary suspension from Methodistical privileges,—putting the member back again into a state of mere probation,—or, finally, the extreme penalty of expulsion."

This power 'they can on no account consent to abandon, or permit to be frittered away.' Some of the reasons assigned for this determined policy are laughable enough:—1. Because it is the preacher's 'special obligation to care most tenderly and anxiously for the spiritual and eternal welfare of the individual whose conduct is implicated!'—2. Because a contrary procedure 'would seriously endanger the rights, liberties, and spiritual privileges of our people!' And, 3. Because the power insisted on is equally 'essential to the protection of an accused individual from the effects of personal prejudice or irritation, or of popular excitement and undue local influence!' This is 'the Wolf and the Kid' all over.

"But the Conference has vouchsafed to grant 'some additional guards and securities to our people for the proper exercise of the powers confided to superintendents;'—and what are they? Briefly as follows: Sentence is not to be pronounced till a week after the trial; but, if the superintendent is satisfied that the case does not call for 'the extreme rigour of the law,' he need not defer judgment: so that the deferring of sentence will be tantamount to expulsion. This seven days' respite is to be employed by the superintendent—how? Why, in 'privately asking information from individual leaders, or other judicious and experienced members of the society,' and in 'hearing the opinions and advice of his colleagues and co-pastors.' This, of course, by way of 'protecting accused individuals from personal prejudice, or undue local influence!' But, supposing that he should receive honest counsel, instead of injurious tittle-tattle to which the respited criminal has no means of replying, is he bound at all by it? Not a whit. He is to form 'his own final judgment,' and to 'decide on the course he ought to adopt.'

"But this is only one of the 'guards and securities.' The man who, after a week's suspense, is expelled, may appeal to the annual district meeting, and



from it to the Conference. It is obvious that neither of these 'guards and securities' is worth a straw to any man on whose expulsion the superintendent may be bent. The unanimity of the recent Conference shows that an appeal from one preacher to any number, from a 'minor district meeting' to the great conclave itself, is the vainest enterprise that could be undertaken. But, if any thing were here conceded to the people, it would be more than counterbalanced by what follows :—

"The Conference resolves that a superintendent, complaining of any leaders' meeting for refusing to act its constitutional part, or for acting it factiously, or in contradiction to law and evidence in the trial of an accused member, shall have the same right of prompt appeal to the revision of a *minor* district committee as has just been granted to an excluded member in the other case supposed."

"Here we behold the cloven foot in full dimensions. The superintendent puts the fact alleged (reserving to himself the right to construe it into a crime) to the leaders. They, knowing his design, defeat it by a vote acquitting the accused. He flies to his committee of five, and the victim is speedily sacrificed.

"But the best of these precious 'guards and securities' is yet to come, in proof of which we must quote again :

"Any conduct in a man professing godliness, which can be shown to be decidedly condemned by the precepts and principles of the New Testament, is surely sufficient to justify, if persisted in, the application of a suitable ecclesiastical censure, or other penalty, to such an individual, even though it may not have been previously found necessary to make a distinct and specific rule of our own society on that exact mode and form of delinquency."

"This is a principle to which, *fairly applied*, no Christian, we apprehend, could justly demur ; but the case is different when an individual, taught to consider himself as put upon a peculiar eminence by the New Testament, is also clothed with exclusive authority to interpret its 'precepts and principles,' and to apply them as he pleases in judicial inquiry.

"The Conference proceed to disclose their intentions with respect to members of the 'Wesleyan Methodist Association,' and some other persons who, avoiding a *formal* connexion with the Association, have applied themselves with unwonted activity and insidious concert to plans and efforts of factious agitation.

"It is hereby declared to be the unanimous judgment of the Conference, that any person who, instead of *peaceably retiring* from our Connexion, if he decidedly disapprove of our system either of doctrine or discipline, and cannot conscientiously even *acquiesce* in them, endeavours to retain and to employ his position among us for the purposes of opposition and strife,—or who continues, after due admonition, to be a member of 'The Grand Central Association,' or of any other confederacy formed for the object of systematic agitation,—is guilty of a flagrant transgression of that *morality of the New Testament*, the observance of which was a principal condition of his admission into our Society, and must be considered to have justly forfeited his claim to the privileges of our religious fellowship."

And this is one of the additional 'guards and securities to the people' against expulsion.

3.—MEETINGS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH CONFERENCE.—"There is one remark under this head, of which, before stating the new regulations concerning them, we must express our decided approbation : namely, that 'it is not good, in matters of discipline, to be ever making new laws.' In this sentiment we cordially concur, believing that all the laws that were designed to enter into the discipline of the Christian church, Christ himself has, by his Spirit, put upon record. It is the Conference that are 'ever making new laws,' and, we may justly add, ever breaking old ones.

"After a good deal about the superfluity of 'other formal meetings,' conveyed in a tone which seems to say, 'You may as well save yourselves the trouble of holding them, for they will never influence us,' we come at length to the regulations on the subject. The following are the conditions on which a special circuit meeting may be called :—

"After the final close of the June quarterly meeting in every year, the superintendent shall detain the circuit stewards and all the society stewards who may be present, whether belonging to the societies in the circuit town or to those in the country places, and shall ascertain from them whether there really exists in that circuit a general or considerable dissatisfaction with any of our existing rules, or a prevalent or earnest desire for the enactment of any new additional regulations. If it be the opinion of a majority of the persons so consulted, or even of any considerable proportion of them, that the wish for alteration is strong and extensive, and, moreover, that the matter is clearly of such importance as to justify the calling of a *special circuit meeting* in order to consider the propriety of sending a memorial to the Conference on the subject, then, and in every such case, the superintendent is hereby directed and required to summon, by

good and sufficient notices to all the parties concerned, such special circuit meeting, which shall assemble within a period of not less than seven days, and not exceeding ten days, from the time of the June quarterly meeting.'

"The preachers' own nominees are to be the judges in the case !

"Well, but if the stewards should happen to be liberal men, is there not some chance that, after all, the people may obtain his High Mightiness the superintendent's permission to meet together, and express their sentiments in free discussion? Not a bit of it. The special circuit meeting is, like all other '*legal*' meetings, to be a secret one, confined exclusively to the preachers and their nominees.

"Oh, the liberality of this concession! A special circuit meeting, to consist of none but those over whose appointment to, and continuance in, office the superintendent has a controlling influence, or, as in the case of trustees of chapels settled on the Conference plan, over whom he has some other means, equally effectual, of exercising a coercive power! Nay, so deep is the dread of the real sentiments of the people escaping even in this strictly defined assembly, that no local preacher or leader who cannot boast of ten years' uninterrupted standing is to be permitted to be present.

"But these are not all the precautions taken to prevent or stifle discussion. For, though this special circuit meeting is to have the right of memorializing the Conference respecting the repeal or alteration of any existing law or the enactment of any new rule, yet, at least three days before the day of meeting, the superintendent is to have notice in writing of 'the precise subject' of debate; all memorials are to be 'limited to such changes only as are consistent with the essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism, and within the pale of our established constitution;' it is only with laws concerning the government of the societies at large, and not with the disciplinary jurisdiction of the preachers over each other' (that is, such cases as those of Stephens, Forsyth, Warren, Emmett, and Averill,) or 'their right of regulating among themselves all that relates peculiarly and specifically to the Christian ministry and the pastoral office' (that is, the establishment of Theological Institutions, and the exclusive power of superintendents,) that these memorials are to interfere; and, lastly, 'the special meeting of one circuit shall not be at liberty to intermeddle with the local affairs or proceedings of any other circuit or circuits.' But neither is this all, sufficient as, one should think, restrictions like these would prove to prevent the slightest expression of public feeling. With a mocking severity of sarcasm, that must enter like iron into every soul that is not utterly dead to a sense of its own dignity, the Conference thus wind up their edifying hocus-pocus:—

"With these necessary limitations, the superintendents are directed to allow, in meetings constituted as aforesaid, the *free* (!) and *friendly* (!!) discussions of our people, and to take charge of any memorial from them, *couched in proper and respectful terms*."

So that, after all, the superintendent can immediately put an end to any discussion which he chooses to consider *unfriendly*, or, if not, can *burke* the whole business at once, by pronouncing the memorial deficient in respect to the mighty conclave.

"Our analysis of these scandalous propositions is too long to admit of additional comment; and, indeed, they speak for themselves. A more audacious insult was never offered to the understandings of Englishmen. These impudent priests presume to dictate to free-born Britons under what limitations they shall enjoy their inalienable rights: nay, under the pretence of loosening the fetters which they formerly rivetted, they have imposed additional restraints; and now, if their mandates are obeyed, no member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society is to speak an opinion, attend a meeting, converse with a friend, read a book or other publication, give a vote, write a letter, do, or attempt to do, any one thing, in domestic, social, civil, or religious life, of which he has not previously obtained the full approbation of his superintendent. Out upon the canting Jesuits!"

The Conference could hardly make a greater mistake than to imagine the discipline of Methodism as explained in these mock "Improvements" essential to its success. Do they not see that the spirit of the times is such as not long to endure despotism in the church any more than in the nation? Are the people, as were Mr. Wesley's first converts, poor, ignorant, drunken colliers? On the contrary, are there

not among them men, by thousands, as fitted for liberty as those who are their spiritual dictators? The great error of the preachers is, that they strive to perpetuate a government suited only for the commencement of the system. In no religious communion but that of the Conference Methodists could so illiberal a system have survived so long. Had those whom Luther called upon to emancipate themselves from the thralldom of Papacy been as liable to be terrified into submission by their ghostly advisers, the kingdom which he shook to its centre might still have remained in all the plenitude of its power, and all the wickedness of its usurpation. But the schoolmaster, after a long delay, has visited the Methodist commonalty; and into those ranks he has gone, and there he is staying, in which their rulers have hitherto gathered their most plentiful harvests. Among other truths, he has taught the scholars an important secret, namely, that though treated as children, they are, in fact, *men*; and that, though usurped, they have rights. We hail the tokens which many have given of the commencement of a more sound state of mind. May such a state be fostered; may it spread from man to man till it pervade the whole Methodist community! Let not the people heed the efforts of the few to repress the dictates of their common sense. A little reflection will teach them what is right, and a little courage put them into possession of their liberties.

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The following address to local preachers, as mentioned in our last, was then unavoidably omitted:—

“And why, we ask, do the local preachers sit tamely enduring the usurpation of men scarcely in any desirable matter their superiors? Are not most of these men who are set above you, ruling to your entire exclusion, from your own ranks? Were they not, yesterday, your associates, your fellow-tradesmen, your equals? What wondrous transformation, then, have they undergone to justify their elevation and your depression? Is there such magic in the colour of the coat? That you put on as often, nearly, as they. Does the virtue lie in the cognomen of Reverend? It is an empty and unmeaning word, too common to be coveted, and too prostituted to confer a distinction. Are they better Christians than yourselves? If so, they would cease to be lords over God’s heritage. Are they in labours more abundant than you? On the contrary, you are the strength, the *titumen*, if not the *decus* of the Methodist cause. Could the Connexion maintain itself without your labours? Would the wants of the itinerants be supplied without your labours? Would they have a people numerous as now to govern without your assistance? Yet you labour, and they enjoy; you proselyte, and they rule; you gather in, and they consume. In all the work you have no share but much toil, spare thanks, and an approving conscience. You sow, they reap. Surely, if they will have all the fruits, they ought to have all the labour of the harvest. And for what object can they take to themselves all power, but to engross all emolument? Would the polity of Methodism be less effective if your voice was heard in the hall of its legislation? Would your own Christian rights be diminished (to diminish them is not easy) if placed under your own guardianship? Would your character be impaired if servitude was exchanged for freedom? Does a man fall or rise as he casts the yoke from his shoulders? Who breathes so freely, who thinks so nobly, who aspires so highly, who so great and so good, and who so like the Deity, as the freeman of the Lord? Men and brethren, ye know not what you lose when you suffer the trammelling of yourselves. ‘Englishmen,’ said Alfred, ‘should be as free as their own thoughts;’ they should, if they are to have ‘the spirit of the Lord,’ if they are to feel the full power of Christ’s Gospel,—if the purposes of time are to be wholly fulfilled, and the discipline for eternity thoroughly and successfully undergone.”

We earnestly and respectfully request the people to reflect seriously and daily on the following:—

\* Of all others we pity the people most: the people we now mean as distinguished from trustees, stewards, leaders, and other functionaries. These latter have some compensation for the servitude under which they suffer, in the control which they exercise. A pitiful compensation, it is true, to act a subordinate part in a system of domination: yet many of them have been slaves, they are slaves, and they would, too many of them, be tools to enslave others. But the poor, depressed, abject people, who bear the chief burden, yet possess not a particle of legitimate influence, who have to do as they are bidden, to think as they are tutored, to speak when they are spoken to, and echo the words dictated by their superiors, who have to empty their pockets and repress their murmurs, are in a state of tutelage worse than that of children in a liberally conducted house. How, fellow-men, can ye endure so galling a yoke? Would ye be Christians?—you must be free. Would you have Christian teachers?—they must not be lords. Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Let the Saviour reply:—‘Whoso shall humble himself as this little child.’ Who is to exercise dominion over Christ’s flock? Let the Saviour reply:—‘Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant.’ Who is to sit in the seat of authority? Let the Saviour answer:—Not they ‘who bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.’ No, such dealings are foreign to the spirit of the Gospel, which, on the subject of religious liberty is thus expressed:—‘Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.’ Do not you, then, know that you owe obedience to none but Christ? Do not you know that in allowing man to rule you in the church you rob Christ of his sovereignty? And have you not minds to think for yourselves and faculties to act for yourselves? Can you not read the Scriptures with your own eyes? Have you not, with the aid of God, spiritual strength in your own bosoms to follow their directions? Or are you no better than grown-up children? Do you need the whip and the control of your fellow-men? Released from the schoolmaster, do you require the spiritual slave-driver? Be men; feel, think, act as men. Look on yourselves. Have you not hands, eyes, and faculties like your fellow-men? Why serve, then, when you might be free? To what end has God given you rational natures if you make a priest and not reason your guide? To what end has He revealed his will, if you read it only with others’ eyes? To what end has He declared you free, if you acquiesce in bondage? You need instruction, you say. So do all; but are we to barter our freedom for knowledge? Knowledge is precious only to be free, and only as it makes free. Listen to the word of admonition; but judge, discriminate, and act for yourselves. You wish, you urge, to obtain salvation. The soul, we answer, is saved only as it is free—free from sin, free from foreign control, free in its inward workings, free in its outward acts. Save yourselves from human domination, and you will, by that one act, have done much to gain a salvation of which now you have little conception. Fall not into the Popish absurdity that a priest can save you. If saved at all, you must, under God’s blessing and aided by Christ’s work,—you must save yourselves. He is a traitor to his own interests, and the interests of his children and his race, who does not his best to restrain the usurpations of Conference. Remember, it is the spirit, not the name, that makes a priest, and if that spirit is not possessed by the rulers in your Israel, you will seek it in vain even in the dominion of the papacy.”

It is, indeed, not a little wonderful that the people have hitherto made such poor progress in vindicating their rights, and that such a system of church government can have subsisted so long as it has done in the midst of a nation possessing no small share of practical liberty. But the true character of the “*Improvements*” will soon be generally understood, and then the system will be no longer tolerated. If we are not greatly mistaken, the few individuals who arrogate to themselves the name, and exercise the authority of Conference, are already aware of the fatal error they have committed. But they have gone too far to retrace their steps with honour to themselves: they have passed the Rubicon.



## PROCEEDINGS AT MANCHESTER.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY, ARBITRARY, AND ILLEGAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE, MANCHESTER SOUTH CIRCUIT, IN THE EXPULSION OF CONDUCTORS, AND CONSEQUENT RESIGNATION OF THE TEACHERS IN CHANCERY-LANE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

[Concluded from page 368.]

At three o'clock the deputation arrived at the schools. After a few preliminary remarks, the deputation proceeded to prefer a number of charges against the conductors and teachers,\* which were indignantly repelled by the latter.

In the course of the afternoon one of the deputation stated that Mr. Souter had warped the minds of the teachers. At this announcement the teachers, in one simultaneous burst of indignant feeling, cried out, "Shame! shame!" "It's false!" "It's not true!"

After nearly two hours' discussion, which was any thing but creditable to some of the gentlemen composing the deputation, the teachers were asked if they would rescind the resolution. Mr. Souter replied, that they had no objection to do any thing for the sake of peace, if the gentlemen present would promise that the teachers and conductors should not be interfered with, but allowed to labour on as usual; and he engaged to guarantee that nothing should be done by the teachers but what they (the committee) might approve of. The deputation replied that they believed the Sunday-school committee had no intention of interfering with the conductors and teachers of Chancery-lane Sunday school, so long as they observed the laws and rules of the institution. Mr. Souter answered, "But we have been threatened with expulsion, not because we have broken any law,—not because we belong to the 'Association,'—for we cannot be charged with either;† but we have been threatened with expulsion for no other reason than because we entertained opinions and sentiments relative to Wesleyan law and discipline different from certain persons in the society."

The deputation demanded of Mr. Souter an explanation, and asked him what he meant; and they further stated that they did not believe there was any intention on the part of the committee to disturb the conductors and teachers of Chancery-lane school. Here Mr. Souter related a conversation which he had with the superintendent, on Tuesday, June 30, 1835. Mr. Anderson stated that he (Mr. Souter) had acted very wrong in not coming forward and siding with the preachers; he ought to have attended the meetings, and mixed with the preachers' party as usual: had he done so his conduct would have had a beneficial influence in the school. Mr. Souter replied, "How can you make that appear; for in the A—s Sunday school two of the leading men there are what you call preachers' men; they support you in every thing, and yet the influence of their principles have not had the effect of preserving the school: numbers of teachers and children have left, and the school is in a deplorable condition? On the contrary, Chancery-lane school is in a most delightful and prosperous state; only one teacher has left, the school is literally crammed full of scholars, and we have strenuously kept the agitating question out of the school."—"No matter," replied Mr. A., "the teachers are a corrupt set; you ought to have supported us, and have gone on without them." Mr. Souter answered, "You amaze me, Sir; the teachers have taken no part whatever in the questions which have agitated the society. They

\* One of the charges brought against the conductors and teachers was, that they had passed a law which alienated the library from the children. The teachers denied that this was their intention, and further stated, that if the rule in question admitted of such an interpretation, they, the teachers, would gladly alter it. All alteration, however, was objected to by the deputation; nothing would be satisfactory but absolute submission; the law must be rescinded. Other charges were, that we were radicals, Warrenites, (nay, one gentleman's remarks were of such a scandalous and personal character, that Mr. Souter, in reply, stated that they were uttered beneath his notice, and he should treat them with contempt; the gentleman afterwards apologized,) purely because we had passed a law to secure the library for the use of the children. A short time ago the female teachers were desirous of having a clock, for the use of their room; a subscription was entered into; Mr. Souter gave nearly one-third of the purchase money. When the teachers resigned they took the clock with them; and this is the whole of the amount of robbery that has been trumpeted forth through the town. The clock belonging to the school still remains in the boys' room.

† We believe there was only one individual in the whole school belonging to the Association; and this was Mr. Simpson, one of the conductors, who was elected to office at the annual meeting, contrary, as they say, to their own laws.

entertain sentiments and opinions different from you, I admit; but they do not belong to the Association." Mr. A. answered, "I don't care; they are disaffected, and we had better be without them." Mr. Souter replied, "What! and scatter the children, and drive away the teachers?" Mr. A. said "Yes, and it will be better in the end." Mr. Souter added, "The only inference that I can draw from what you have said is, that as you want to be without those who have not supported you, and as I have not supported you as you wish—and that I could not do, because I believed you were wrong—you must, of course, want to be without me." Mr. A. replied, (at the same time nodding his head very significantly,) "*It will come to that, ultimately.*"

At this the deputation appeared amazed, and stated that whatever the superintendent might do, they believed there was no wish in the committee to expel either the conductors or teachers. Mr. Souter replied, that the committee had not the power to prevent the expulsion of the conductors. The superintendent, as chairman of the committee's meetings, could prevent the election of any officer, or by withholding his society ticket could disqualify any person from acting as conductor, and thus effectually expel him from the institution; and the committee had no remedy but must submit. One of the deputation admitted that they had no remedy, should such a circumstance occur. The deputation again inquired if the teachers would rescind the resolution. The teachers answered *No*; they could not acknowledge the committee's right to interfere with the Chancery-lane Sunday-school library. There now appeared, evidently, a disposition in some of the deputation to coerce the teachers into a compliance with their demand; but to prevent, if possible, the consequences that might result from such a measure, Mr. Souter stood forward, and begged and entreated the deputation not to interfere with the school. He said, the school is in a delightful, happy, and flourishing state; and nothing can interrupt our prosperity, if the committee will but let us alone. *I solemnly pledge myself, (continued Mr. Souter,) in behalf of the teachers of this school. I dare pledge my Sunday-school existence, and my Methodist existence too, that nothing will occur to disturb our quiet, if the committee will but allow us to proceed on in our labours in the school without interruption.* Some of the deputation (the governing party) were, evidently, determined to proceed in the unholy warfare. One of the gentlemen, expressing himself to that effect, (which created a feeling of sorrow and disgust in the minds of many present,) gave out (strange to tell) that memorable hymn—

"Together let us sweetly live,  
Together let us die;  
And each a starry crown receive,  
And reign above the sky."

The teachers perceiving the amazingly wide difference between the coercive tone in which the gentleman had been indulging, and the character of the hymn he had just given out, began to retire from the room in the utmost disgust, and left the gentleman to sing and conclude the meeting nearly alone. On Monday evening, July 13th, the committee re-assembled in Grosvenor-street vestry, and after a good deal of altercation they passed the following resolution:—

"At a meeting of the General Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday schools in the Manchester South Circuit, held 13th July, 1835,

"*Present,*

"Rev. JOHN ANDERSON in the Chair,

"Rev. John Bedford, Messrs. J. Harrison, John Leadbeater, Jas. Wood, G. R. Chappell, Joshua Rea, — Greaves, John Wilson, R. Yates, Wm. Wilson, T. Wiltshire, — Potts, R. Mayor, W. Newton, T. Townend, Robert Henson, H. Cryer, G. Vitty, Thos. Lomas, John Lomas, John Napier, Joseph Marshall,

"*It was resolved,*—That Mr. Souter having refused to attend a meeting of the committee to answer a charge of 'gross dereliction of duty' preferred against him, the committee, while they express their firm determination to maintain the authority vested in them; yet, considering the standing of Mr. Souter, as a conductor, and being disposed to exercise forbearance towards him, do hereby declare that he be for the present *suspended from his office of conductor* in the Chancery-lane Sunday school, and require him to attend a meeting of the committee to be held on Friday evening next, at eight o'clock, in the vestry of Grosvenor-street Chapel.—By order of the Committee,

"J. MARSHALL, Secretary.

"*To Mr. Wm. Souter, Union-street, Ardwick,*

"*Manchester, 14th July, 1835.*"

At the same committee meeting three other conductors, Messrs. James Simpson, Charles Scholfield, and James Hardman were expelled: the two former

had notes sent them to that effect, and charges preferred against them similar to those preferred against Mr. Souter; yet was he *only suspended*, but they were expelled. Mr. Hardman was treated in a more insulting manner (if possible) than the rest. The note sent to him from the same meeting is as follows:—

"At a meeting of the General Committee of the Wesleyan Sunday schools in the Manchester South Circuit, held 13th July, 1835, it was resolved,

"That Mr. Hardman, having been acting as conductor in the Chancery-lane Sunday school without the authority of this committee, be forthwith informed by the secretary that in future his services will be dispensed with."—By order of the Committee,

"To Mr. J. Hardman.

"J. MARSHALL, Secretary.

"Manchester, 14th July, 1835."

The following is a copy of the resolution sent to Mr. Scholfield and Mr. Simpson:—

"It was resolved,—That they having refused to attend a meeting of this committee, to answer a charge of 'gross dereliction of duty' preferred against them, and the circumstances of their cases having been considered, be dismissed from their offices of conductors in the Chancery-lane Sunday school.—By order of the Committee,

"Manchester, 14th July, 1835."

"J. MARSHALL, Secretary."

Mr. Souter, as stated in the resolution, was required to attend a committee meeting, to be held on Friday evening, the 17th instant. To this meeting he wrote the following note, and received in answer to it a resolution of the committee, confirming his suspension from the office of conductor of the Chancery-lane Sunday school.†

"To the Rev. John Anderson, Chairman of the Sunday-school Committee.

"REV. SIR,—I have received, through the secretary, the following resolution, said to be passed at a meeting of the Sunday-school committee, held on Monday evening last, in the Grosvenor-street vestry,—'That Mr. Souter having refused to attend a meeting of the committee, to answer a charge of gross dereliction of duty, the committee, while they are determined to maintain the authority vested in them, yet, considering the standing of Mr. Souter as a conductor, and being disposed to *exercise forbearance towards him*, do hereby declare that he be for the present *suspended from being a conductor in the Chancery-lane Sunday school*.' As a conductor, I am the servant of the committee; and I admit they have the power to deal with me as they may deem proper; but while I bow to their decision *as a conductor*, I most solemnly protest against their proceedings in the present case. In comparing the above resolution with the expulsion of my worthy fellow-labourers from the school, I can only come to one conclusion on the subject, namely, that the fears and apprehensions of my friends are unhappily realized. My days of delightful labours are ended in the most happy, peaceful, and prosperous Sunday school in this large manufacturing district. One thing, however, does appear to me very extraordinary,—that a library worth about £150 should be a more important consideration than ten years' labour, and about £300 expended in various ways to promote the welfare of the Sunday school and the cause of religion in that immediate neighbourhood. In stating the above I know I shall expose myself to the charge of vanity: to this, however, I must submit, as well as to the many foul slanders that have been before circulated.—I am, yours, respectfully,

"Ardwick, July 17th, 1835."

"W. SOUTER.

Committee's Resolution.

"At an adjourned meeting of the Committee of the Wesleyan Sunday schools in the Manchester South Circuit, held 17th July, 1835, the letter of Mr. Souter having been read, it was resolved,

\* It has been usual in the Chancery-lane Sunday school, previously to bringing any person before the committee as a conductor, to propose him at the teachers' meeting in the school. In this way Mr. Hardman had been brought forward, and cordially received by both conductors and teachers, without a dissenting voice. His piety and long standing in the church, both as a leader and Sunday-school labourer, eminently fitted him for being a conductor; yet not having been regularly and formally brought forward and passed by the committee, he was driven away in the summary and insulting manner stated in the above note. Part of the committee was composed of the very persons who, but a few Sabbaths before, objected to receive into George-street school, as a conductor, Mr. Leadbeater, who was appointed by the committee, *because he had not been first approved of at a teachers' meeting*. How ridiculously inconsistent do some persons act, especially when determined to make law and justice twist any way to suit their own purposes!

† At this meeting Mr. Anderson complained of the absence of nearly all the *high party*: he stated more than once that he had been *goaded on* in the affair by certain gentlemen, and that when he was brought into a dilemma, they had left him to bear the responsibility. Several of the individuals who had goaded on Mr. A. (very seldom attending the committee meetings, unless especially invited by the preachers to assist them to do something they cannot manage themselves, carrying on a system of misrule which will eventually destroy Methodism,) were persons who had manifested the greatest enmity to Mr. Souter; one in particular had repeatedly slandered Mr. S., and afterwards, when Mr. S. wrote a note to him on the subject, the slanderer refused to give any explanation; and yet before a tribunal of such men the conductors of the Chancery-lane Sunday school were summoned to be tried!

"That the suspension of Mr. Souter from the office of conductor be confirmed; and that this meeting records its most solemn disapprobation of Mr. Souter's repeated refusal to appear before the committee of which he is a member, to answer the charge of 'gross dereliction of duty' preferred against him, and that the secretary communicate the same to him."

"JOSEPH MARSHALL, Secretary."

"Manchester, 18th July, 1835."

*Resignation of the Teachers.*

The teachers feeling themselves insulted and persecuted in the persons of their conductors, met together on Friday evening, 17th July, in the school-room; and after a short consultation unanimously came to the following resolution, and deputed two of their number to carry it to the secretary, as the organ of communication with the committee:—

"To the Committee of the Wesleyan Sunday Schools in the Manchester South Circuit."

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the undersigned librarians, secretary, and teachers of the Chancery-lane Sunday school, feeling, as we do, deeply and sensibly the injury done to the school by the very harsh treatment of our conductors, have come to the resolution of tendering our resignation, and of retiring from a place where the conductors that have laboured for years, and spent their strength in the work, have been expelled, and are no longer recognised as officers of the school."

Signed by the Teachers present.

On the Sunday morning after the expulsion of the conductors, they and the teachers met in an old dye-house near Ancoat's-bridge, kindly offered by Mr. John Gallemore (may the Lord bless him!) Before ten o'clock nearly 700 children, with about 60 teachers, were assembled together. Being destitute of books, the forenoon was spent in singing and prayer. Mr. Souter commenced the service by giving out the following appropriate hymn:—

"Come let us join our cheerful songs  
With angels round the throne;  
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,  
But all their joys are one."

All joined heartily in singing the two first verses, but when the children began to sing the following—

"Jesus is worthy to receive,  
Honour and power divine," &c. &c.

the effect was overwhelming—numbers of both teachers and children wept aloud. Mr. Souter could proceed no further, and for some time there was a solemn pause. Mr. Hardman attempted to proceed with the hymn, but was utterly unable to go on. The scene that followed baffles all description; sighs and tears, mingled with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, were heard from all parts of the room. After a moment's pause all knelt down. Solemn prayer was offered to the throne of the heavenly grace, and God was specially present. Many could say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." This indeed was a token for good! In the afternoon nearly 800 met again. Numbers of children in the Bible and Testament classes brought books with them from home, and the teachers again resumed their usual delightful employment.

Thus one of the most prosperous Sunday schools in this part of the country has been wickedly broken up: and had it not been for the deep and lively interest which the teachers felt for the welfare of the rising generation, hundreds of children would have been thrown into the streets; and the consequences to themselves, as well as to their friends and the public, would have been fearful. The teachers would not have appeared thus before the public, nor have noticed the falsehoods so industriously circulated by their opponents, had not some of their kind friends been imposed upon by them. Whatever might be the motives of those who gave circulation to such vile calumnies, they must answer for it to Him by whom *motives* as well as actions are weighed. If their object was to prejudice the public mind against the conductors and teachers, and to conceal a gross act of *tyranny, oppression, and cruelty*, by means of calumny and slander, that object has been signally defeated.

As soon as the decision of the committee was officially made known, the conductors and friends of the school set about preparing plans, &c. for the erection of a new Sunday school. On Monday, the 20th of July, at half-past twelve o'clock, the estimates were got in, and at half-past one the excavation of the ground for the foundation was commenced. The conductors and teachers have contracted with a builder to erect a school capable of holding upwards of 900 children, and which will be used for an infant school, if required.



In consequence of the circumstances which have taken place, as stated in the foregoing pages, Mr. Souter has felt it to be his duty to resign his office as Leader in the Methodist Society. The following is a copy of his resignation :—

*“ To the Rev. John Anderson, Grosvenor-street Chapel.*

“ REV. SIR,—After serious and prayerful consideration, I feel I have no alternative left me but to resign into your hands the office I hold as Leader in the Wesleyan Methodist Society, Manchester South Circuit. The unhappy position in which I am placed by the extraordinary, arbitrary, and illegal proceedings of a part of the Sunday-school committee, (*goaded on by yourself,*) has rendered the present step on my part absolutely necessary.

“ I feel it no small sacrifice to be obliged to break up many of my social connexions, and to abandon many of my social and religious enjoyments in a society in which I have spent many happy years, and in which, I trust, I have not altogether laboured in vain. I do, however, sacrifice my interest in Methodism, as *at present constituted and administered.* I sacrifice my privileges and enjoyments among a people whom I love, rather than live in a state of ecclesiastical slavery, under a government, the principles of which are, I conceive, purely despotic.—I am, Rev. Sir, yours, respectfully,

*“ Ardwick, August 24th, 1835.”*

*“ W. SOUTER.*

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### WESLEYAN METHODIST ASSOCIATION.

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*(From the Liverpool Mercury.)*

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A meeting of the friends and members of this body was held in the Music-hall, Bold-street, on Tuesday evening, 15th September, for the purpose of hearing an address from the Rev. John Gordon, of Dudley, on the recent proceedings of Conference in reference to the Association, and on the present state and prospects of Methodism. The meeting having been opened with singing and prayer,

Mr. GORDON rose, and after some preliminary observations on the circumstances which brought him to Liverpool, said he should confine his remarks to the Minutes of Conference at Sheffield, in the present year, and that he particularly wished to direct the attention of the meeting to a part of those Minutes which was headed “A Special Address of the Conference to the Members of the Wesleyan Societies of Great Britain,” and which contained an account of the long-expected concessions which that Conference had declared its intention of making. The first thing to be remarked was the very high tone assumed by Conference. A great deal was said respecting what were called the rights and powers of the pastoral office, and the tone adopted was that which a master would employ towards his servants, or rather,—a despot towards his slaves. (Hear, hear.) He was sure he need not inform them that, according to true scriptural principles, a Christian pastor was not the master, but a servant of the Church, or that the members of that Church were not the slaves, but the brethren of their ministers. He looked upon the ministerial office as one to which God called men when he imparted to them sufficient qualifications for it, and gave them opportunities for the exercise of those qualifications, but as to the possession of any rights or powers, he believed that the word of God left it as a matter of arrangement between the ministers and the people. The Conference, on the other hand, seemed to think that the ministerial office should be considered and treated by the people as infallible, and in one part of the Minutes it was expressly declared, that the principle of the people watching over and interfering with the conduct of their ministers was an odious principle. It was said in the ordinary address of the Conference to the Methodist societies, that the members of the Central Association should prove their right to agitate the Methodist societies on the subject of church government, by supernatural evidence. With reference to that point he would just remind them that when Mr. Wesley commenced his course of evangelization, he was asked over and over again by the members of the Church of England, who were opposed to him, to prove his right to evangelize this country by supernatural evidence, and that the Jews asked Christ to prove his right to alter their ecclesiastical polity by a sign from heaven. Now he thought that when any man, or body of men, claimed infallibility, they ought to prove their pretensions to it by supernatural evidence, and till they did so they had no right to call the watching

and supervision, to which he had just referred,—an odious principle. Another thing which developed the high tone assumed by the members of the Conference, was the constant reference throughout the Minutes to the favour vouchsafed to them by Almighty God. The decision of the Vice-Chancellor and Lord Chancellor in the case of Dr. Warren's suit in Chancery was over and over again referred to as an instance of such favour. (Hear, hear.) Nay, it was more than insinuated, it was almost directly said, that that decision was a demonstration that the favour of Almighty God was vouchsafed to that peculiar system of polity which the Methodist Conference was desirous to uphold, and that it had not only decided the dispute with the Central Association, but also the question whether Methodism or Church-of-Englandism, Methodism or Presbyterianism, Methodism or any other system of Church government, was the most scriptural and most consonant with the will of God. Was there ever an instance of wilder enthusiasm, grosser fanaticism, or greater arrogance than this! (Hear, hear.) The sign from heaven, which the Conference had adduced in support of their claim to infallibility, was the decision of the Court of Chancery in the suit of Dr. Warren, and yet he need hardly remind those who knew any thing of the administration of justice, that a decision might possibly be given in favour of a rogue, as well as of an honest man. (Hear, hear.) The high tone assumed by the Conference contrasted strangely with the scurrility and blackguardism which was contained in their address to the delegates assembled at Sheffield, and which had even been improved upon by the editor of the *Methodist Magazine* for the last month. The Conference denounced their enemies as "wicked and foolish men," but if they were so foolish, and if the mode by which they sought to establish their opinions were so contrary to the principles of reason and the Gospel, there was a manifest inconsistency between their strenuous exertions to put down their opponents and the contemptuous and scurrilous tone in which the Conference spoke of the Central Association. He was sorry to be obliged to use such strong terms, but he must say that the Conference had been guilty of ineffable hypocrisy. They declared that Dr. Warren, by endeavouring to establish by legal means what he considered to be a right, had violated not only the principles of Methodism, but also those of the New Testament, and yet the very same men spoke of the trustees who had resorted to legal means to keep Dr. Warren out of Oldham-street Chapel, Manchester, and resist his exercise of the ministry, as deserving of the thanks of the whole Methodist Connexion. (Hear, hear.) To call that a crime in Dr. Warren, which was commended in the trustees, namely, an appeal to the civil jurisdiction, was, he contended, a piece of ineffable hypocrisy on the part of the Conference. No longer ago than last week three gentlemen in the Dudley circuit were summoned before the magistrates, by the Conference party, for a disturbance of public worship,—their offence being praying and singing in a school-room on the Sunday. The magistrates dismissed the case, and made the Conference gentlemen pay the expenses. (Applause.) He himself had been summoned before the magistrates for the crime of preaching out of doors.

Another thing to be observed was the malignity manifested throughout the whole of this address. Formerly, when a person was expelled, the only notice taken of it on the Minutes was, that so and so had ceased travelling. But, in the cases of Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Averill, Dr. Warren, and others, it was stated in so many words that they had been expelled from the body altogether, and ceased to belong to it in any way. (Hear, hear.) The Conference declared in their address that they felt called upon to acknowledge the hand of God in the decision of the Court of Chancery as confirming the validity of Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration, as securing to the preachers appointed by the Conference the inalienable occupation of the pulpits, and acknowledging the Conference as the supreme tribunal of Methodism through the medium of the district meetings. Mr. Gordon characterized these statements as being false, and then proceeded to say that the Conference in their address of 1835, whilst professing to grant concessions, had in reality extended their own powers, and circumscribed still further the liberties of the people. The alleged concessions were divided into three heads,—1st, financial affairs; 2dly, the expulsion of members; and 3dly, meetings for communicating with Conference by memorial on subjects of local concern, in connexion with the general laws of the Society. This was not a logical or consistent division of the subjects, but the Conference was responsible for it, not he. If all that the people demanded,—all that they had a right to obtain with reference to financial affairs, were, in reality, conceded to them, it would not touch the main point in dispute, for it was unessential to the question now agitated throughout the Methodist

Societies. The dispute was as to the power exercised by the preachers over the people, which they declared to be absolute and irresponsible; and that would remain just where it was, even if all that was demanded respecting the management of financial affairs were conceded. It was just as if the Government of this country, when the people demanded a reform in the House of Commons,—a reform relating to the organization of Government, should, instead of granting such reform, have endeavoured to satisfy the people by taking off the tax on salt, or collecting the customs in some different way. (Hear, hear.) No mode of administering the financial affairs would be equitable or satisfactory but that which was agreed to by the people, who were the subscribers. At present the funds were disposed of by committees composed of individuals either directly nominated by the Conference, or known to be in a state of perfect subservience to the Conferential system. The Conference had, however, admitted the shadow of lay delegation, by permitting the contingent fund committee to be composed of fifteen laymen in addition to fifteen preachers, and the time would soon come when that principle would be something more than a mere shadow. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Gordon then at great length contended that the expulsion of members, and all questions relating to membership, ought to be according to the Plan of Pacification in 1797, and the principles of Methodism,—vested in the leaders' meetings; and that the Conference, in exercising such powers through the district meetings, had been guilty of usurpation. He also showed that at present the superintendent is empowered both to declare what is law and to determine on the punishment, the only question left for the leaders' meeting being whether the person brought before it has or has not been guilty of an infraction of what the superintendent declares to be the law. Thus, the preachers made laws without the consent of the people, and only permitted the people to say through their representatives whether the person brought before them had or had not broken the laws so made.

This was bad; but it was not the worst. Another thing which filled him with horror and disgust was the fact that throughout the whole of this address the Conference put the laws of God, and the laws of Methodism, as declared by themselves, precisely on the same footing. If one man had committed theft, or drunkenness, or any other crime against the laws of God, and another, who might be an honest or honourable man, had attended what was called an "illegal meeting," or done something else which the Conference had forbidden him to do, both were looked on in the same light, both treated in the same manner, and both liable to the same punishment. (Hear, hear.) The preachers claimed these despotic and irresponsible powers by virtue of the pastoral office. Now, if this were said by a Roman Catholic priest, or a clergyman of the Church of England, he might believe in the sincerity of the claim, for both stood upon a regular ordination, and professed to derive their power in uninterrupted descent from the apostles; but there was nothing of this kind in Methodism. Any man might become a pastor who possessed the requisite qualifications; the local preacher was as much a minister as the travelling preacher, the leader as the local preacher; and yet, with a strange inconsistency, the preachers claimed a power, by virtue of their pastoral office, to condemn and expel men who had precisely the same power as themselves. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Gordon then adverted to the authority given to superintendents to hold meetings, under the pretence of allowing the people an opportunity of expressing their grievances, as being a still further encroachment on their liberties, and as calculated, indeed intended, to deprive the leaders' meetings of what little power still remains to them. The principle for which the Association was contending, was the same which was now advocated through the length and breadth of the land, nay, throughout the whole circle of the civilized world: it was that the many should not be ruled for the benefit of the few; (loud applause;) but that they should be governed by themselves for their own advantage—the good of the whole body being the only object to which all government, civil or religious, should be directed. (Applause.) It was that principle which was so successfully agitated, years gone by, on the continent of America, when taxation without representation was declared to be a grievance,—it was that principle which procured a reform in Parliament: and that principle working in harmony with human reason, social arrangements, and the dictates of the Gospel, would be found sufficient to shake to its centre so flimsy a thing as the Methodist Conference. (Loud applause.) No man or body of men could stop the progress of that principle. They might take the money out of his pocket, the blood out of his body, but they could not take the thought out of his heart. (Applause.) He saw the truth and

felt its power, and nothing could remove its impression from his mind. Let the truth once find its way in society to a certain point, and no despotism, civil or ecclesiastical, could resist its progress. (Applause.) The man who would attempt to stop it would have said to Wesley "You have no right to travel through this land for the purpose of reforming the Church of England." (Hear, hear.) That man would say that Luther ought to have continued to the day of his death a Popish priest,—that Calvin, Zuinglius, and the other reformers ought never to have been born,—that the Jewish polity ought still to have prevailed, and that Jesus Christ ought never to have descended from heaven to establish a better system on its ruins. (Hear, hear.) The cause of truth, like a mighty stream, would go on gathering strength in its progress, widening and deepening its course from the very obstacles which opposed it, and ultimately it would bring all who trusted themselves on its bosom, into the ocean of a blissful eternity.

The speech, of which the foregoing is a very meagre and imperfect sketch, occupied nearly three hours in the delivery, and was listened to throughout with the utmost interest and attention.

### PROGRESS OF METHODIST REFORM.

The cause of reform advances with steady pace, thanks to the authors of the "Explanations and Improvements." In addition to the following intelligence from various places, we have gratifying accounts from Lincolnshire, Surrey, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cornwall. We are glad to learn, too, that public meetings are about to be held in the metropolis and its vicinity. It seems the new rules in regard to the "Expulsion of Members," judging from the contradictory decisions of superintendents, are found not to "*work well*." Mr. Walmouth, superintendent of the Whitehaven circuit, and Mr. T. Dunn, superintendent at Oldham, by way of evincing their *ardent affection* and *intense solicitude* for the flock committed to their charge, pursue the good old plan of expelling by wholesale such as belong to the Association; whilst Mr. Wild, superintendent at Carlisle, and Messrs. Marsden and Dixon, of the Liverpool South Circuit, adopt a contrary course. So much for lawgivers without the genius of lawyers! To say nothing of the reprehensible spirit of the superintendents, it is remarkable that their schemes always issue in their own defeat, and to the advantage of the Association. Oh, that the preachers would indeed "*renounce the world and its pursuits!*" The *Watchman* says they have done so. *Credat Judæus Apella!*

*Prescot.*—A majority of the societies in this town and neighbourhood have identified themselves with the Association. On Sunday last Dr. Warren preached two sermons to overflowing congregations; in the forenoon, in a very commodious room neatly fitted up as their future place of worship, and, in the evening, at the Independent Chapel, the use of which was handsomely granted by the Rev. Mr. Rogers, to whose kindness, on this occasion, the parties feel themselves much indebted. A collection was made after each service towards defraying the expenses of fitting up their temporary house of prayer. In the afternoon a love-feast was held. The services were very encouraging, and of a truly Christian character. Scarcely twenty persons attended in the evening at the old chapel. It is a remarkable coincidence, that the room now fitted up for the use of the Reformers is the same which was originally occupied as a place of worship by the Methodists in Prescot. Mr. Wesley himself preached in it soon after it was opened, nearly half a century ago, and there we shall again behold Methodism in its purity.

*Sandbach.*—Having heard of the repulse the delegates met with from Conference, we called a meeting of officers of the society, and resolved to assist the good cause. We have formed four classes here and one at a short distance from us, and we are about to hold a public meeting.

*Lostwithiel.*—Extract of a letter,—“There is one point to which I must call your attention.—In my opinion no plan is likely so effectually to bring down the pride and reduce the power of our dictatorial Conference lords as the stoppage of supplies,—not only donations and subscriptions, but class and ticket-money. Some may object, that it would prevent the preaching of itinerants.—Be it so. Let it be known that the local preachers, officers, and people can do very well without them. In many circuits neither the zeal nor the talent of travelling preachers is above mediocrity. Are we to be dictated to by such men as these? The adoption of this plan is in contemplation here.”

*Oldham.*—A little band in the Conference society, in the true spirit of Christian sympathy, assembled to take into consideration the present afflicted state of Methodism; and for thus consulting together how they might best express their views and feelings, several of the most useful officers and brightest ornaments of the society were expelled by the sole authority of the superintendent. They, however, kept together, and lately engaged a good chapel, well situated; they have also a large Sunday school, for the benefit of which two sermons were preached on Sunday, the 13th instant, by Mr. David Rowland, of Liverpool. The collections exceeded £24.

*Birmingham.*—Extract of a letter from *W. M. C.*—“We have taken a small chapel which will accommodate about 400 persons, and are going on well. On Monday last, (14th instant,) the friends of Methodist reform took tea in a large room; about 300 tickets were disposed of, but upwards of 400 persons were present; the most sanguine among us did not expect such an assembly. Several animated speeches were delivered after tea, and the greatest harmony and good feeling prevailed throughout the whole of the proceedings.”



**Carlisle.**—The superintendent, Mr. Wild, has had several interviews with the leading friends here, and professes a great deal of liberality: he admits that Mr. Dunn acted improperly; but it is of no avail. The people have taken their stand, and are determined to keep it.

**Ashton-under-Lyne.**—Our readers will be gratified to learn that the numerous body who so nobly stood by that public-spirited and much-injured minister, the Rev. J. R. Stephens, are going on prosperously. The Conference party tried every means to wrest from them their large school and preaching-room, but hitherto (thanks to the firmness of a few spirited trustees) without success. Attached to this room is a numerous Sabbath school, the anniversary sermons for which were preached by Mr. David Rowland, of Liverpool, on the 6th inst. The services were truly animating and hallowing; and the collections amounted to upwards of £30.

**Whitehaven.**—Thirteen leaders, local preachers, and trustees were put on their trial here on Monday, the 14th instant, charged with being members of the Association. Such a farce even in these days of violated justice was seldom, if ever, heard of. On the superintendent being expostulated with by one of the accused, as to the irregularity of his proceedings, he directly pronounced the "blessing," and ran away from the scene of trial. Thus the right of membership of these thirteen men has been trifled with by an individual who would not suffer the irregularity of his proceedings to be so much as questioned. Judgment will probably be pronounced in a week from the Monday, although the matter was not so much as put to the vote of the meeting. This worthy judge attended a second meeting of the Association here, and when the members refused to disperse, he endeavoured by brute force to obtain possession of the Order Minute Book. His next effort was to threaten to call a constable to drive them from the premises. Yet Dr. Warren was censured for appealing to the laws of his country!

**Liverpool.—Pitt-street Chapel.**—Of brother James Gardener's class, formerly sufficiently numerous to almost fill the vestry, only about ten members met to renew their tickets; and of another class, only three, with the leader. On Wednesday last, the 16th instant, they met the Rev. James Dixon, when the following conversation took place, highly illustrative of the consistency of his Reverence.—*Sister* —, on being called on, said,—I think it right to observe, before you give me a ticket, that I am a member of the Association.—*Mr. Dixon.* How long are we to be annoyed in this way?—*Sister* —. I did not think it would annoy you to tell you the truth.—[After a few more words, Mr. Dixon gave her a ticket.]—*Sister* —. I am a member of this class out of respect to my leader and the class, but I am not a contributor.—As a true and consistent member of the Association, *Sister* — withholds her class-money for other and better purposes. But what can be thought of the consistency of the preachers, who published a "Declaration," dated 20th December, 1834, and signed George Marsden, James Dixon, and John S. Stamp, stating that no member of the Association should be allowed to remain in society?

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**TO OUR READERS.**—As it would be very desirable at the present time to possess accurate information respecting the numerous secessions from the Conference body, which have recently taken place, we request such of our friends as have it in their power to assist us, to forward their communications at their earliest convenience. Perhaps there is not a circuit in which there cannot be found one, two, or in some places three separate Methodist societies driven out by the arbitrary and lawless conduct of the Conference agents, we would, therefore, respectfully suggest to our distant readers the utility of furnishing us with information in regard to such cases in their respective localities.

We regret that we cannot spare room for the letter of resignation of Mr. James Chadwick, St. Helen's, to the Rev. James Smetham. On several accounts Mr. Chadwick felt it to be his duty to resign his office of local preacher. The violation of the laws of 1795 and 1797, the despotism by which spiritual rights are trampled upon, and the people prevented from pleading for their restoration—the neglect of pastoral duties, and love of money which have of late distinguished the preachers, &c. &c.

We perfectly agree with *A. A.* that few men possess the eloquence and reasoning powers of the Rev. John Gordon, of Dudley, an able report of whose speech at the Music-hall, we understand, will appear in the *Christian Advocate*. Even the outline which we have given will be read, we doubt not, with delight and admiration.

Let *Sener* read the Minutes and the speech of a certain Doctor at the ex-President's levee previously to the meeting of Conference, as reported in the *Watchman*, and compare them with the extract from that newspaper in the second page of this *Lantern*, and he will discover in the author of the "*Improvements*" an "occasional contributor" to the *Watchman*.

The crowded state of our columns with matter claiming a preference is our best apology for omitting *A Minister of the New Connexion*, which shall appear, if possible, in our next.

*Causidicus* is too lengthy for the purpose of the *Lantern*, and the subject has already been sufficiently discussed. We judge of compositions by their merit, not by their size. Besides, we disapprove of the ingenious method of measuring the worth of an harangue by the hour-glass, he being considered the ablest orator who speaks the longest on a question; for which excellent invention it is recorded that we are indebted to the same profound Dutch critic who judged of books by their bulk, and gave a prize medal to a stupendous volume of flummery—because it was "as tick as a cheese."

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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## WESLEYAN REFORMATION.

### EXTRAORDINARY PROCEEDINGS AT ROCHDALE.

In the whole of our experience of "Methodism as it is," we do not recollect any proceedings of a more extraordinary character than those we are about to detail. The trustees of the old Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, in Rochdale, conceiving themselves aggrieved by the conduct of the preachers, and finding the responsibility of their engagements too heavy to be borne, were desirous, a short time ago, of making a public statement of their grievances, with the view of procuring assistance in their trust; in short, a mere consultation with the people was all they sought, in order that the work of religion might proceed without hazard or danger. They applied to the constituted authorities in such cases, the preachers,—who are, the Rev. John Sumner, the Rev. John M'Owan, and the Rev. Samuel Allen,—for permission to make use of the chapel for this purpose. They intended to use only their own premises,—not to take possession of the pulpit, or to dispossess those whom the Conference had appointed to minister over them. From reasons which may be inferred from the facts which subsequently took place, the preachers unanimously refused to grant this moderate request. The trustees, under these circumstances, had but one alternative, and they requested the preachers, on the part of the Conference, to exonerate them from the liabilities of their trust; but, as may be expected, this application was declined. The trustees were then placed in this dilemma—they were not allowed to consult, in their own premises, upon their own business, nor to retire from the numerous and heavy engagements (said to be several thousand pounds) to which they were legally liable. A public meeting was, however, called by them, to be held at six o'clock on Thursday evening, in their own chapel,—a step which they took upon an assurance from the preachers implying that no legal proceedings would be adopted. Notwithstanding this, being prompted by excessive zeal for the high Conference party, some active emissaries from the preachers resolved to restrain the trustees from holding the meeting, by procuring an injunction to that effect from the Court of Chancery. They heard that the Vice-Chancellor (Sir L. Shadwell) was not in London, and, after considerable difficulty, they discovered that he was at some place in Yorkshire. Away they posted there, and without giving any notice to the other side, and upon a statement purely *ex parte*, they obtained from his Honour the desired instrument. There is every reason to believe that the injunction arrived in Rochdale very early on Thursday morning, and men inexperienced in "Methodism as it is," or men, indeed, accustomed to litigation, would imagine that it would have been served upon the parties at a period of the day sufficiently early to enable them to provide for holding the meeting at some other place. The preachers, whatever may be thought of their equity and fairness, were too good tacticians, too experienced in the principles of the Methodist Conference, to avail themselves of this opportunity to manifest a spirit of regard and conciliation towards those who had gone astray. At three o'clock in the afternoon the first notice was served, that the trustees had been "restrained from holding the meeting by an injunction in a suit wherein the Rev. John Sumner, the Rev. John M'Owan, and the Rev. Samuel Allen, preachers at the said chapel, are the plaintiffs, and the said trustees and others are defendants." It was thought by the preachers that the much-dreaded meeting was thus effectually prevented from being held; but they were mistaken. The trustees and their friends immediately issued placards, announcing that, in obedience to the injunction, the meeting would not take place in the Wesleyan Chapel, but that, although driven from the place which they and their friends had erected at their own charge, they had secured *two* places for holding meetings at seven o'clock, through

the kindness of friends belonging to other denominations, namely, in the Baptist Chapel, West-street, and in St. Stephen's Church (Lady Huntingdon's); and that the Rev. Dr. Warren, Mr. Farrer, Mr. D. Rowland, and others, would deliver addresses at both places.\* In the Baptist Chapel, Mr. Livesey, of Bury, an old and consistent member of the Methodist Society, occupied the chair; and the meeting, which was crowded to excess, was addressed by the gentlemen already mentioned. Mr. Samuel Heap presided over that in St. Stephen's Church, and the same gentlemen also spoke. Great numbers were obliged to go away from both chapels, being totally unable to obtain admission. The greatest interest was manifested on the occasion, as will be acknowledged when it is stated that the meetings lasted from seven o'clock to half-past eleven. The anomaly of the Methodist Conference sitting with closed doors, and holding secret deliberations, whilst every institution in the community is subjected to publicity, was ably exposed by Dr. Warren, and many convincing proofs mentioned of its tendency to make the preachers consider themselves infallible. The departure of the Conference from the primitive laws of Methodism, and the gradual inroads of corruption in discipline and practice were also pointed out, and in a manner that carried conviction home to every hearer. Many cases of expulsion, without regard to age, sex, or numbers, were detailed; and an opinion generally expressed, that the public had only to be informed to open their eyes to the injustice and iniquities of the system as it is. We had prepared a copious report of the speeches, but are compelled, from want of space, to substitute the above meagre sketch of these remarkable proceedings.—*Manchester Times.*

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### WESLEYAN METHODIST CONTROVERSY.

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What is a Wesleyan Methodist? In what light does he wish others to regard him—and what is the standard by which he measures himself? These are questions he is bound to answer, and to answer in such words as, though they may be gainsaid, cannot be misunderstood. Between God and his own soul, we believe, no one is disposed to interfere. We dare not meddle in these holy things. There is but One, whose eye can search, and whose doom will reach all alike, without respect of persons. HE knows the *hearts*, and *therefore* awards according to the *deeds* of men. But the Wesleyan is our neighbour—our fellow-townsmen—one of the same land, the land of all our fathers, with ourselves. On this ground he must meet us, for we have a word or two to say to him. And, first of all, we should be obliged if he would inform us what *the Conference* is, of which we have latterly heard so much—the Conference of the *people* called Methodists? We have been given to understand that it is made up of the priests of the sect—not of the whole of them, but of a part, in what proportion or under what regulation we could never learn; that these again, when assembled, are only hearers, lookers-on, and voters by courtesy, and under control—and that the pulse, the purse, the power, of the mighty body, of which our Wesleyan friend is a member, is lodged in the mysterious, the uncontrolled, and uncontrollable HUNDRED, who are the well-head of all the weal or woe accruing to general society, through the agency and in the name of Wesleyan Methodism. Is it so? Are we right or wrong in the idea we have formed of the constitution and prerogatives of this mystical Hundred? If we are misinformed, will some Wesleyan have the goodness to correct us, for it is a point of some consequence both to him and to us. If the Hundred be, what we are told it is, then shuffle, shaffle, shuffle, as they please, we denounce it as an anti-legal and anti-constitutional union, that cannot co-exist with the acknowledged liberties of the British empire. These men come together, do they—and sit with closed doors, guarded by familiars of their own, and there discuss—what?—the difference between penance and penitence, consubstantiation and transubstantiation? No—but the subject of the position of our universal Church of England in its political relations; and determine, what?—that no preacher shall wear pantaloons or a lapelle coat? No—but that if any preacher, in the exercise of his birthright, as a member of the commonwealth and of the church, shall advocate the separation of that church from the state, he shall be forthwith arraigned, suspended, and expelled, because such a sentiment as this is at variance with Methodism and with Christianity. Are these things so? Do

\* The speakers announced to take part in the proceedings, as well as the trustees of the Wesleyan chapel, were served with copies of the injunction, and some of them were served upon the parties as they were entering the Baptist chapel.

these Hundred inquisitors come together to legislate upon the political rights of Englishmen, whereby not less than a million of our fellow-countrymen receive a direct and abiding influence—without the knowledge of the Government—and without any check from public opinion? It cannot be—and yet here lie their Minutes of Conference for the very last year, printed by authority. Wesleyan Methodist! how is this? Confess it, or explain it, or deny it. Do set us right, we pray thee, for there must be something wrong somewhere. So monstrous an invasion of God Almighty's province and authority cannot surely exist under the name of the Conference of the people called Methodists.

We inquire, secondly, of our Wesleyan friend, how far he considers himself bound by the decrees of this conclave? When we find the mark of the beast on the forehead of these published minutes, and when he calls himself a member of the Society whose Conference this is—where are we to draw the line between the knavery of the priest, and the stolidity of the people; the cunning craftiness of right reverend fathers in God, and the stereotyped credulity of their little children? We have been at no small pains to come at the truth on this head, but hitherto with very little success. "Are these the minutes of the Conference of the people called Methodists?" said we the other day to a friend of ours. "Yes," was the reply. "Are you one amongst that people, by right of acknowledged and continued membership?" "I am." "Then these are your minutes, expressing the sentiments and opinions of your body; containing the letter of its laws, and the outline of its institutions?" "Of course." "Very well, then, of course you are ready to abide by and defend the minute which denounces the separation of church from state as anti-Wesleyan and anti-scriptural; which, consequently, condemns myself and others of your fellow-countrymen, members of that church, who, in the exercise of our right as British subjects, are seeking to sever this unnatural connexion?" "No," said he: "I cannot defend that—for I think with you, and so do thousands of our members—I believe the majority of them." "How then," we replied, "is it called one of the minutes of the Conference of the people called Methodists—these preachers are your representatives, are they not?" "No." "Do you not choose them, send them up, and acknowledge them as the organs of your opinions?" "No; they meet in their own right, independent and irrespective of us altogether." "Then do you mean to say, you have no means of making known your views on such a question as this—and that nevertheless your clergy in conclave can publish sentiments the very reverse of those you entertain, by authority, as the recorded and unanimous sentiments of the Conference of the PEOPLE called Methodists—is it so?" "I believe it is," said our friend, "but I do not wish to have any thing to do with the minutes—I seldom read them, and don't consider myself responsible for what they contain." "But are you *bound* by them—does your Wesleyan character and ecclesiastical existence depend upon the laws therein promulgated; and are you, as my neighbour, obliged to stand committed by the decrees they may contain?" "I cannot deny it to be as you say," said he, "and yet I am hardly willing to confess myself driven into the difficulty you are thrusting me into." Now this is the very point we want to discuss with our Wesleyan friends still of the Conference party. Yea or nay, the one or the other, and then let us have it in black and white. Secrecy and shuffling will not avail another hour. The eyes of the country are turned upon the proceedings of this awful Hundred. We were not aware till now that such a power as this was systematically and steadily in operation, undermining, not the outworks, but the first bulwark and best fastness—the very Acropolis of our national liberty and independence. Set our minds at rest on this head, and we will leave our Wesleyan friends. We will trouble them no more. But until a satisfactory answer is returned, they may expect to hear from us again and again. One thing, in conclusion, we can assure them of—that they must either be prepared to set themselves reputably right with their fellow-citizens, or make up their minds to be handed over, not to the indignation, but to the ignominious contempt of mankind.—*Manchester Times*.

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## THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS LAY DELEGATION.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In the 14th number of the *Illuminator* the progress, or rather the declension, of the New Connexion, is commented on in an article signed *Epsilon*; as he states a few facts which tell rather to our disadvantage, I shall take the liberty of stating a few which will speak a little in our favour. In the year 1828 the increase in the New Connexion amounted to 1116, being 10 per cent.



on the number announced the preceding year; in 1833 our increase was 2163, being 17 per cent. on the number of the year preceding: in 1834 our increase was 500, and at the late Conference the increase for the past year was 2462, being 16 per cent. on the number for last year; of the last-mentioned increase about 1000 are seceders from the Old Connexion: whether this fact is more to their credit or to our credit I will leave *Epsilon* to ascertain. In the year 1825 the numbers in the New Connexion were 10,837, at the late Conference they were 17,746; thus, during the last ten years, we have increased more than one-third, whilst the Wesleyans during the same period have increased about one-fifth.—*See the New Connexion Magazine for December, 1834, p. 461.*

From the preceding statement it appears that, during the last ten years, the ratio of increase in the New Connexion has been considerably greater than in the old. It has been attempted to deprive us of the credit arising from this fact, by asserting that “every new aggression on the unoccupied territory of the world lessens the amount of the material to be operated upon; and that, in the nature of things, it may be expected that a large body cannot, as the sphere of its operations lessens, in any particular place, augment with the same rapidity as when they were small.” If these observations have any truth in them, they apply as forcibly to the New Connexion as to the old; if they constitute an excuse for the comparatively slow progress which has of late years been made by the Wesleyans, they constitute a still more plausible excuse for what is said to be the small increase of the New Connexion. Besides, we have not only found the material to be operated upon lessened by the aggressions of others, but we have been destitute of those advantages which have given to the Wesleyans such vast capabilities for usefulness. The largeness of their body, instead of being a hindrance, as is intimated above, has invested them with a respectability, in the estimation of the public, and has given them an extent of influence over the public mind which a *small* body cannot possess; in addition to this, they have had popular preachers, wealthy members, and spacious and elegant chapels in abundance, and yet, with all these circumstances, giving them so decided a superiority over us, their ratio of increase during the last ten years has been considerably less than ours. Another fact deserves notice. The time when the Wesleyans increased with the greatest rapidity was a time when the people, particularly the working classes, were buried in ignorance,—knowledge, not only on religious but on general subjects, was possessed by the few,—whilst the mass of the people were covered with intellectual darkness; the most prosperous period of the New Connexion has been that which has been distinguished for the rapid and extensive diffusion of knowledge, a period during which the public mind has risen to a higher state of improvement and energy than it ever previously attained, yet, during this period, the ratio of increase in the Old Connexion has diminished, whilst ours has increased. The truth is, that priestly domination will prosper most extensively whilst surrounded with darkness, its best friend, its native element; the diffusion of light will discover the evils arising from such an assumption of power, and will favour the propagation of those principles which, based on the declarations of Scripture, recognize the rights and secure the liberties of the people.

I must now refer your readers to the 9th number of the *Illuminator*, which contains an article headed “The New Connexion and its Theology;” in this article *Epsilon* expresses his “fears lest there should be a deterioration of Methodist divinity in our community.” This deterioration, if it take place, must, of course, be the result of lay influence; the probable “want of discrimination, spirituality, and courage on the part of lay members, will disable them from raising “a vigorous and effective opposition against the intrusions of heresy,” and thus we are to be overwhelmed with heresy as with a mighty flood; indeed, *Epsilon* is “convinced that there is danger of the New Connexion, from its being principally a lay government, departing from the faith.” We are obliged to him for his warnings, but we have no sympathy either with his “fears” or with his “convictions.” But really, Mr. Editor, the contemptuous manner in which this writer speaks of the lay members of the Christian church is unutterably disgusting; he treats his lay brethren as though they were fools and hypocrites,—he more than insinuates that, because they are engaged in worldly pursuits, they must, of necessity, be worldly minded,—that the preachers, by coming into closer contact with them, would be defiled and corrupted,—that the preachers exclusively possess purity of intention, spirituality of mind, soundness of judgment, and firmness of principle.—“Doubtless they are the men, and wisdom shall die with them.” The tone of insufferable arrogance which has been lately assumed in the *Illuminator* will work its own recompense—“Pride goeth before

destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." *Epsilon*, in order to support his positions, refers to the old Presbyterian churches in England, almost all of which are sunk either into Arianism or Socinianism, thus evincing the dreadful consequences of giving power to the people. It would have been more fortunate for this writer's argument if the English Presbyterians, along with their degeneracy in doctrine, had maintained that predominance in numbers by which they were once distinguished. "At the end of Queen Anne's reign they formed at least two-thirds of the whole dissenting body; at present they do not exceed a twentieth part of the three denominations." From this degeneracy in numbers, as well as in doctrine, we may, I think, infer that the heresy of the English Presbyterians commenced with the *ministers*, and not with the people, and that the latter have been driven from their chapels by the unsavoury and unsatisfactory food with which their pastors have endeavoured to nourish them. *Epsilon's* statements would have been more plausible and more forcible could he have proved that English Presbyterianism had not been superseded by another form of church government, a form in which democracy and orthodoxy are combined, and in which they co-operate with that energy and success which furnish a most triumphant refutation of the arguments which this writer adduces. He very well knows that there is scarcely a heterodox Presbyterian congregation in England that has not an orthodox independent congregation for its near neighbour, and that, almost invariably, whilst the heterodox chapel has hardly a third of its sittings occupied, the orthodox chapel will not have a third of its sittings vacant; so then, however far the Presbyterian teachers have wandered from the truth, it is evident that the people have not followed them in their wanderings, and that they, so far from being aware of any danger resulting to them from the possession of church power, have preferred a form of government which renders their power absolute: indeed, it would appear that the more popular the form of church government, the stronger the security for soundness in the faith; for where shall we find a body of ministers, or an association of people, more uniformly and zealously attached to the doctrines of the Gospel than the ministers and members of the congregational churches of England and America? And if principles are to be tested by the numbers which advocate them, then popular principles of church government are superlatively excellent. The Independents and Baptists of England, the Kirk of Scotland, and the sects of seceders, together with the Independents and Baptists of that country, the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian, the Congregational, and the Baptist churches of America, and the Protestant churches of Holland, have all adopted a popular form of government, some of them being *republican* and some *democratic*: in numbers they constitute an immense majority of the Protestant churches of Europe and America; in doctrine they "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Thus, amongst Protestant communities, the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion has the exclusive honour of investing ministers with absolute power, a power which, whilst it is, in reality, irresponsible as it respects the people, involves, in reference to God, a responsibility which is truly awful; a responsibility which God does not require his ministers to sustain, and which no minister would assume who either knew his own heart, or who duly considered that the possession of such power had caused the infatuation and downfall of thousands and tens of thousands, who, had they occupied their proper station, had they been simply the ministers of the churches, instead of being lords over God's heritage, would probably have preached pure doctrines, would have exhibited holy lives, and would have been safe examples and faithful instructors to the people. If these remarks require confirmation, we have only to refer to the records of church history; there we find that, so long as the government of the church was carried on by the joint counsels and authority of the ministers and the people, comparative purity of doctrine was preserved, fundamental truths were firmly maintained, and prominently exhibited; but as the power of the priesthood increased, and that of the people diminished, the most dangerous errors were introduced and propagated, corruptions of monstrous magnitude were substituted for the pure and simple doctrines of Christianity, and that divine system which had gone forth, invested with the power and splendour of truth, diffusing light, liberty, and peace wherever its principles were developed, was, in the spirit of priestly traffic, and in the exercise of priestly domination, bartered away for another system, distinguished only for its dogmatism and tyranny, its darkness and superstition.

But to return to the New Connexion. *Epsilon* finds fault with the phraseology adopted in our summary of doctrines. Unfortunately for him, the language of which he complains as ambiguous is the language of Scripture—"He that

believeth hath the witness in himself: it is our privilege to be fully sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." Although we have thus employed the words of the New Testament as the most unexceptionable that could be adopted, this writer, having quoted them, and then directly referring to them, has the audacity to say—"How dangerously liberal are these doctrines in their construction!" Surely *Epsilon*, when writing this sentence, forgot that he was censuring the language of divine inspiration.

That our meaning may not be misunderstood, our summary is concluded with the following sentence:—"For the illustration of these doctrines we refer to the first four volumes of Mr. Wesley's sermons, and to his notes on the New Testament." It might be supposed that this reference to Mr. Wesley's works would have satisfied every one, however precise and fastidious; but it does not satisfy *Epsilon*; he is determined to pass the sentence of condemnation. He says that "this reference in the new system is *unauthoritative*, and, therefore, *uninfluencing*; that no rule exists *binding* the preachers to read the standard writings of Wesleyan theology, and *requiring* them to declare that they cordially believe every part of the creed as it is therein illustrated." Truly this writer would make a most excellent Pope; he would fill the pontifical chair most admirably; his views of the submission which ought to be rendered to human authority are so amazingly comprehensive; he has also most exalted ideas of the absolute control which human authority ought to exercise over the freedom and independence of human judgment. Should any attempt be made to enact a law *binding* the New Connexion ministers to what is stated above, and requiring from them what this writer specifies, I feel confident that such an attempt would be promptly, unanimously, and successfully resisted by the preachers. As Methodist preachers we venerate the names of Wesley and Fletcher; we pay a most respectful attention to their writings, and esteem them as important and valuable helps to a right understanding of the Scriptures on certain doctrinal points, but we do not regard either these excellent men or their writings as infallible; we therefore render them only a limited deference, believing that *submission* is due to the Scriptures alone: we are so simple-hearted as to regard them as the only *unerring standard of Christian* theology, and we have also a conviction that whoever searches them with diligence, humility, and prayer, will be guided into all truth. "We call no *man* master, for one is our master, even Christ."

With all our laxity and lay influence, the denial of the Eternal Sonship has not originated with us; it has originated, in modern times at least, with the Wesleyan Methodists, a denomination the ministers of which have a morbid dread of lay influence, a devoted attachment to unscriptural tests, and an infuriated zeal for non-essentials. And what have their rigidity and bigotry done? Why, they have done more to disseminate Dr. Clarke's sentiments on the Eternal Sonship than all that the Doctor either wrote or said on the subject. Had the Wesleyan Conference let the question of the Eternal Sonship alone, had they taken no notice of it, it would by this time have sunk into oblivion, nor would they have been one tittle less orthodox than they now are. To *bind* men's consciences by the imposition of tests on non-essential points, is to provoke unprofitable controversy, and to ensure the propagation of error.

Much has been said in the spirit of insolent and invidious boasting of the *working* of the old system, evincing to demonstration, in the opinion of its friends, its unquestionable superiority. The facts stated in this letter are not very much calculated to give us an exalted opinion of the excellent working of this immaculate system. As it respects the working of the New Connexion, I will not state what we have done, but I will state that we have not been called upon to lament secessions of greater or of less extent at Leeds, Ashton, Truro, Newark, and Gateshead; we have not, as ministers, been compelled to publish and circulate *Watchmen* and *Illuminators* for the purpose of vindicating our conduct and of maintaining our authority; we are not under the necessity of using all possible means of subduing a powerful and well-organized opposition that has arisen up against us from amongst our own people. Our societies are not agitated and divided by the operations of a Central Association, nor are we, as ministers, visited with the painful reflection that timely and moderate concession would have prevented the formation of such an Association, and have rendered those our firmest friends and supporters, who have been forced into an attitude of hostility, by our own acts of preposterous and antisciptural authority. We have not had to expel several of our brethren in the ministry, merely because their opinions on non-essential points differed from those of the oligarchy, and the slaves of the oligarchy. We have not had to reprove and

humble others for favouring what we might call a spirit of faction amongst the people; nor have we to reflect that thousands of our people, dissatisfied with our proceedings, have separated from us, and have disowned us for ever; nor, finally, have we to labour under the mortifying conviction that there are yet thousands who disapprove both of our conduct and of our system, but who remain in communion with us, either from the influence of family connexion, or from merely personal attachment to us, and who are unwilling openly to oppose those whose feelings they cannot wound, but whose measures they cannot approve.

I remain, Sir, yours very respectfully,

August, 1835.

A MINISTER OF THE NEW CONNEXION.

## PROCEEDINGS IN THE CHESTER CIRCUIT.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—“As I live, saith the Lord, sin shall not go unpunished.” Without taking upon myself to determine whether the Wesleyan Conference has been guilty of that which amounts to a sin, and leaving it to casuists to determine whether the taking away the right of a man does not amount to a transgression of the Divine law, this much is evident, that the Conference has been guilty of something on account of which God is angry, and for which he is punishing them. Hence the want of “peace within the walls,” and “prosperity within the gates,” of Methodism, and the virtuous indignation of an affectionate and peace-loving people whose rights they have trampled upon, and whose liberal support they have abused.

Many instances have occurred in this neighbourhood of the Almighty punishing the representatives of Conference by the agency of those very persons upon whom, in the pride of their Conferential character, they have insulted and spit upon. An instance of this has occurred within these two or three weeks, at a village called Helsby, about two miles from Frodsham. The Wesleyan Chapel is the freehold property of Mr. Burgess, one of the principal Methodists of that village, whose house has been the hostelry of the preachers, local and travelling, for somewhere near thirty years. This has been to them a “land flowing with milk and honey.” Here they have eaten, and drank, and slept; and from this house they have “departed in peace.” This gentleman has for several years been disgusted with the bearing of the Conference Barons, the tendency of their measures, and also with the domination of one or two individuals in the Chester circuit, of which Helsby has hitherto been a part. Mr. Burgess showed the nature of his sentiments by admitting, to the great annoyance of the Conference preachers and their partisans, the Association preachers from Frodsham, to preach in his chapel on alternate Sunday evenings, at the same time determining to wait the issue of Conference before he proceeded farther. When he found that Conference had merely made a few alterations without improvements, that his hopes of a satisfactory adjustment of differences between the preachers and people were blasted, he determined, as a man and a Christian, that he would not, by supporting the preachers and their system, be a party in oppressing his fellow men and Christian brethren. Accordingly he availed himself of the first opportunity to dismiss the travelling preachers from doing duty at his chapel, and from his well-stored board. On the first visitation, therefore, of the Rev. J. Straw, the colleague of the redoubtable Mr. Stamp, to the neighbourhood of Helsby, Mr. Burgess availed himself of the opportunity of doing what he had purposed in his heart. On that occasion the following conversation took place:—

Mr. STRAW.—Can I have half an hour's conversation with you, Mr. Burgess?

Mr. BURGESS.—Why, I am engaged at present, but what are you wanting to converse about?

Mr. STRAW.—This unpleasantness.

Mr. BURGESS.—Oh, I have made up my mind about it; I have been disgusted with your proceedings for some years, and I have come to the determination to have no more to do with you.

Mr. STRAW.—And have you weighed the thing over in your mind?

Mr. BURGESS.—Oh, yes! I have weighed it over, and I have come to the determination to join the Association, and the members will go with me.

Mr. STRAW.—Good-bye, Sir.

Mr. BURGESS.—Good-bye.

The Association preachers of the Northwich circuit now supply Mr. Burgess's chapel, and he and nearly all the members have joined the Association.



On the 9th ult. the Rev. Mr. C. Dixon made his first visit, on coming into the Northwich Circuit, to Norley. He had the mortification to have to preach to a congregation consisting of only six individuals, in a chapel that will hold 300 people. After preaching he said he understood that there was a society in Norley some time ago, but was sorry that Satan had got among them. He hoped, however, that the members would return again, and that things would go on comfortably. But the Wesleyans of Norley, every one of whom is joined to the Association, are not to be entrapped by the fine speeches, or brought back by the entreaties of Mr. Dixon. They are "strong in faith," fixed in their principles, and therefore are determined not "to know" the agents of Conference work, but to "avoid them," and "have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness." The members of the various societies in this circuit, who have attached themselves to the Association, are generally in a state of great prosperity. They are growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and, leaving first principles, are going on to perfection. Sinners are convinced and converted, backsliders are "recovered from the snare of the devil," and God is glorified.

At the quarterly meeting of the Association, held on the 28th ult. at Northwich, the most delightful harmony prevailed. Among other things it was unanimously agreed that henceforth no malt liquor should be used at dinner at our quarterly meetings; that, instead, we should have coffee or water; and that, as Wesleyan reformers, we should lend our influence and example to promote the cause of temperance.

M. M. D.

Frodsham, September, 1835.

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#### THE SPECIAL ADDRESS OF THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST CONFERENCE EXAMINED.

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Agreeably to the repeated requests of many of our excellent friends, it is our intention to insert the whole of the Rev. J. Gordon's recent speech at the Music-hall,—a speech, says the *Christian Advocate*, "totally without example in the history of Methodism for all those qualities which fit a man for detecting sophistry, for chastising fraud, for placing hypocrisy in the pillory, for making the feet of faithlessness fast in the stocks,—for threading (in a word) the labyrinth of priestcraft, and, with ferret-like precision, facility, and speed, dislodging the vermin that infest them from their inmost haunts. The success of Mr. Gordon is evident from the affected sneer at his 'juvenility.' Indeed, it must have been a bitter pill to a Whig of twenty years' standing, to be foiled in his attempt to impose upon a million of men, by a mere boy in comparison of him. We suppose any thing would be more tolerable to such a man than to be seen prostrated by a stripling upon his accustomed arena,—biting, in his anguish, the very dust which he so lately made Bromley, his great antagonist, devour with much apparent appetite; and seen, too, in that humiliating posture by the faithful 850, who have so often hallooed him upon his prey, and tested the strength of their brazen throats in exultation at his paltry triumphs. Why, oh! why, John Gordon, were you not a man of twice your years? Why, oh! why did Goliath fall, not by the hands of the warrior king, but by the stone and sling of a shepherd-boy? And why, above all things, was he *decapitated with his own sword*? Mysterious questions! and yet, ah me! such is the dire, the calamitous fact!—This allusion to the youth of Mr. Gordon is, in fact, a high compliment, the imprudent utterance of which can only be accounted for by taking into consideration the delirium of vexation of the utterer. But Mr. Gordon is styled (by the sapient *Watchman*) an 'itinerant orator,' as well as a 'juvenile' one. And is itinerancy disreputable? We fear that it is in the estimation of some persons, when we observe the numerous instances in which large towns are divided into a multiplicity of circuits, and snug *rectories* erected in the immediate neighbourhood of large chapels."

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#### BRETHREN,

I shall confine the observations I may make to you on this occasion to the Minutes of the Conference of this year, and it is my design especially to direct your attention to a part of those Minutes which is headed "A Special Address

of the Conference to the Members of the Wesleyan Societies in Great Britain," as that address contains an account of the long-expected concessions, which that Conference declared it was their intention to make to the Methodist Societies. Before, however, I enter on the consideration of this Special Address, there are one or two points to which I would call your serious attention, and which do not stand exclusively connected with that address, but rather refer to the whole of the Minutes in which such address is contained. The first thing, I should suppose, which must strike the attention of any individual who may read over the Minutes of the last Conference, is the very high tone which is assumed by the members of that Conference. There is a great deal of talk,—I believe, indeed, this point is more frequently referred to than any other,—a great deal of discourse throughout the whole of these Minutes, about what is called the "rights and powers of the pastoral office." The tone of discourse adopted, with regard to this subject, seems exactly the sort of tone which a master would employ towards his servants, or rather which a despot would employ towards his slaves. (Hear, hear.) I need not, I am sure, inform you, instructed as you have been, especially of late, as to the principle which should regulate the intercourse of a Christian minister with his people, that such a tone is not at all in unison with the scriptural relation between them; I need not inform you that a Christian pastor is not the master, but a servant of the church; I need not inform you that the members of that church are not the slaves, but are the brethren of their ministers. It seems to me, that the ground of all this talk about the rights and powers of the ministerial office is a complete sophism. I know not, as I before expressed to you in this very room some months ago,—I know not what the rights and powers are which the Gospel gives to any particular class of ministers. I look upon the ministerial office as an office to which God calls men when he imparts to them sufficient qualifications to that office, and gives them opportunities for the exercise of those qualifications; and as to any rights or powers with regard to the government of the people, which a minister may possess,—as to the rights or powers of church-government, which the people themselves possess,—I believe that all this is left by the word of God as a matter of arrangement between the minister and the people. It is very manifest, however, throughout the Minutes of the last Conference, that there is a principle on which all this discourse about the rights and powers of the ministerial office is built; and that is, that the ministerial office should be considered and treated by the people as infallible. (Hear, hear.) Over and over again is reference made in the way of blame to any interference with the conduct of a minister who assumes the government of a Christian church, on the part of the people whom he governs: and in one part of these Minutes it is expressly declared that the principle of the people watching over and interfering with the conduct of the minister in this respect, is "an odious principle." (Hear, hear.) The phrase to which I have just referred, as applicable to this point, the phrase "odious principle" may be found in the address of the Methodist Conference, to, I think, the Canadian Conference. Now, it is said, in the Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies, not this Special Address, but the ordinary one, that the members of the Central Association should prove their right to agitate the Methodist Societies on the subject of church-government, by "supernatural evidences." That assertion is, of course, as every one must see, altogether folly. No man should be required to prove a right to diffuse Scriptural truth every where within the sphere of his influence, by supernatural evidence; and I would just remind you, that when Mr. Wesley commenced his career of evangelization, the individuals connected with the Church of England, who were opposed to him, asked him over and over again,—a point frequently alluded to in the pamphlets of the time,—to prove his right to evangelize this country by supernatural evidence. I would also remind you that the Jews when Jesus Christ came to alter their ecclesiastical polity, asked Him to prove his right to interfere with that polity, by a sign from heaven. The reason why I mention the circumstance of these gentlemen requiring supernatural evidence is, that when any man or body of men lay down the principle of infallibility as the ground of any power they think they ought to exercise, they should be made to prove their pretensions to such infallibility, by supernatural evidence, and until they have produced such proof, they have no equitable right to call the watching and supervision, to which I have just referred, an odious principle. (Hear, hear.)

Another thing which especially develops the high tone assumed by the members of the Methodist Conference, is the constant reference which is made throughout the Minutes of that Conference to the favour of Almighty God as vouchsafed to them; and this reference is specially made, and over and over again made, with regard to the decision of the Vice-Chancellor and of the Lord Chan-

cellor in the case of Doctor Warren's suit in Chancery. In one part of these Minutes it is not only said, that the Almighty should be thanked for this decision, as, indeed, men sincerely holding the opinions of the Conference would be justified in saying,—but it is more than insinuated,—it is almost directly asserted, that the decision of the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chancellor has demonstrated, that the favour of God is vouchsafed to that peculiar system of polity which the Methodist Conference is desirous to uphold. (Hear, hear.) Now, I know of no instance of enthusiasm or fanaticism which can go beyond such a declaration as this, which is to be found in the book now lying before me. Remember, that if this decision of the Court of Chancery bears with it the proof of the truth of Wesleyan polity, it not merely decides the question against the members of the Grand Central Association, but also decides whether Methodism or Church-of-Englandism—whether Methodist or the Independents—whether Methodism or Presbyterianism—whether Methodism, or any other system of church-government, is most scriptural and most consonant with the will of God. Was there ever such an assumption? Was there ever a station assumed by any body of men whatever, which demonstrated greater arrogance on their part, than this? (Hear, hear.) I said, a few moments ago, that when these men laid down the principle of infallibility as the ground of the rights and powers of the pastoral office, as exercised by them, they ought to be required to support their pretensions by supernatural evidence; they ought to be required to produce a sign from heaven in favour of such pretensions. Now, in this part of the Minutes, I find that a sign from heaven is produced, and that sign is the decision of the Lord Chancellor in Dr. Warren's suit—a decision which might, as all who know any thing of the proceedings in a court of justice will readily admit, just as probably have been given in favour of a rogue as an honest man. (Laughter and applause.) The proud tone assumed by these gentlemen is not, however, very well sustained throughout the Minutes of the Conference. There is a striking contrast between the high tone assumed by these gentlemen in some parts of their Minutes, and the low and vulgar tone which they adopt when speaking of their opponents. The address of the Methodist Conference to the Delegates assembled at Sheffield, contains as fine a specimen of blackguardism as was ever uttered by any man, whether in or out of the pastoral office: and in the Magazine of last month, the low and vulgar tone of accusation expressed in that address to the Delegates is improved upon considerably by the editor of that Magazine.

Two things must strike the mind of every man, with respect to the low and vulgar tone of the Minutes of Conference. The first is the miscalling of names. This denominating of their enemies as slanderous, calumnious, wicked, destitute of truth, and piety, and decency, without any proof being brought forward to establish the points thus asserted, is falling into the very criminality, committing the very evil of which these gentlemen accuse their opponents. There is no greater proof of blackguardism with which I am acquainted than the calling of bad names. The second remark which I would make in reference to these low and vulgar accusations, is, that it is very strange if their opponents are so foolish as they represent them to be; if the modes by which they endeavour to establish their opinions are so contrary to the principles of reason, and so contrary to the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that so much pains should be taken by the Conference to put these opponents down. There is a fear manifested altogether inconsistent with the contempt expressed. No one can read this document without being struck with the ineffable hypocrisy of it. As an instance of that hypocrisy, it is stated in one part that Dr. Warren, in instituting that suit in Chancery about which so much has been said, not merely committed a wrong as far as Methodism was concerned, but also a manifest wrong as a Christian man. It is declared that "Dr. Warren has forfeited the right of now making his appeal to the Conference by his having previously appealed, in violation of an established rule of our body and *the injunction of the New Testament*, to a civil jurisdiction;" and yet, in another part of these very Minutes, it is said that the trustees who kept Dr. Warren out of Oldham-street and Oldham-road Chapel, deserved the thanks of the Methodist Connexion, deserved to be lauded by the whole body, because they, by *legal means*, resisted him in the exercise of his ministry.\* (Hear, hear.) I pretend not to determine in which of these two cases the Conference was right; but I say that to accuse Dr. Warren of a breach of the law of the New Testament, and to praise men who committed an act of the very same kind

\* The Minute censuring Dr. Warren for appealing to the Court of Chancery was scarcely printed, when Conference instructed their agents to threaten law proceedings in Whitehaven, commence actions in Dudley, and to gallop post-haste into Yorkshire after the Vice-Chancellor for an injunction against the Rochdale trustees. Ineffable hypocrisy!

as that of which Dr. Warren is accused, is a piece of the most ineffable hypocrisy. Have there not been frequent appeals to the law of the land on the part of the Conference and their defendants, not only in the case of Dr. Warren, but in other cases also? Why, I have been credibly informed that when a special district meeting was held in Dudley, some time ago, the deed of a chapel was placed on the table, and the gentlemen present very gravely considered whether they should not bring me before some court of judicature for having presumed to deliver a lecture. (Hear, hear.) No longer ago than last week informations were issued against three gentlemen of the Dudley circuit, for having disturbed, as it was said, the exercise of public worship; and when they appeared before the magistrates, the crime of which they were accused was having conducted public worship in a Sunday School, and the disturbance of public worship consisted in the noise of the singing, with which these Conference gentlemen were, of course, considerably annoyed. The magistrate, however, served them as they ought to be served; he told them that their conduct was altogether unchristian,—ordered them to pay the expenses, and made them sign a paper authorizing the defendants to occupy the school-room until the tabernacle which they were building in the village should be erected. (Applause.) This decision of the magistrates altered, of course, the policy of these gentlemen; but I have been informed that an application was made for a summons against myself, and I was to be brought before a magistrate to answer for committing the crime of preaching out of doors. (Hear, hear.)

Another thing with which any person who reads these Minutes must be struck, is the malignity which is manifest throughout. There is one circumstance to which I would especially direct your attention. Every one who is acquainted with the way in which the Methodist Conference commonly deals with such cases, knows that when a man is expelled from the body, his expulsion is not, in so many words, declared in the Minutes. The question is, "What preachers have desisted from travelling?" and the answer simply states the names of the individuals who have been expelled. I have looked over six or seven volumes of the Minutes of the Wesleyan Conference, and, with the exception of one case in which it was said that such an individual was "excluded," the names are simply recorded as having "desisted from travelling," the object being, of course, to avoid irritating unnecessarily the feelings of the persons expelled, and doing any permanent injury to their character, should they repent of their sin and turn again into the right way. In the present year, however, the answer to the question "What preachers have desisted from travelling?" is, "Joseph Forsyth, Samuel Warren, LL.D., John Averill, and Robert Emmett, who, after a full examination of their several cases, *were unanimously excluded from our body, according to the usual forms of discipline exercised by us on such occasions.*" Now, brethren, to my own certain knowledge, a number of individuals have been expelled in former times for breaches of God's law, for gross and abominable immorality, and yet no such stigma has been fixed by Conference on those men; but when a man differs from the Conference, in matters of discipline, though he is not and cannot be accused of any act of immorality, the malignity excited by such conduct induces a Conference composed of Christian ministers, to stigmatise the character of that man, and declare in so many words that he has been expelled from the body. (Hear, hear.) There is another instance, "James Jones and John Gordon, who sent in their resignations during the year, which resignations have now been unanimously accepted by the Conference, and they are accordingly declared to have no longer any connexion with us, either as preachers or MEMBERS." This is another manifestation of the same Christian spirit which induced the Conference to put down Dr. Warren as excluded, though they refrained from putting down as excluded, individuals who had been convicted of gross immorality. I should mention that there was a circumstance connected with my case, of which I have a sufficient evidence, though every one of you knows that it is hard to get at the proceedings of the Methodist Conference, which assembles with closed doors, and, as my friend Mr. Rowland knows, not only with closed doors, but with closed gates also. (Laughter.) When my resignation was talked about, some wise gentleman said that I should not be permitted to resign, but ought to be expelled, inasmuch as I had done as much to merit expulsion as Dr. Warren, Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Averill, or Mr. Emmett. It was, however, known that I resigned before I committed any act of overt rebellion against them; and one of the preachers, a little wiser than this over-wise gentleman, said, "But if you expel him you must give him notice of trial." This seemed to strike them with some astonishment, and it was said by an individual, whose name was mentioned to me, that that being the case, it being necessary that I should have a trial, it would be better to accept my resignation,



lest I should keep them two days longer. (Laughter.) You see, therefore, that they were very desirous to expel me,—that they were anxious to fix any possible disgrace upon me,—but yet they were not willing to hear one word from me in my own defence.

Another thing to which I would direct your attention is what I will not hesitate to call the falsity of various statements which are made on those Minutes. I will refer you to the statement made here as to the result of this Chancery suit, which was decided in favour of the Conference. They say, "They feel especially called upon to acknowledge the hand of God in these decisions, as confirming the validity of Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration, securing to the preachers appointed by Conference the inalienable occupation of our pulpits; recognising the pastoral supervision and authority of the Conference, as the supreme tribunal of Methodism, through the medium of its district committees." Now, of these three statements every one of them are *false* statements. The decision of the Lord Chancellor did not establish "the validity of Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration," for the validity of that deed was not a point mooted in the Court of Chancery; Dr. Warren acknowledged the validity of that deed as well as the other party; and it was therefore wholly beside the mark to say that the decision established its validity. Again; the decision did not "secure to the preachers appointed by Conference the inalienable occupation of their pulpits." It might secure their occupation under common and ordinary circumstances; but not when the trustees were obliged to pay out of their own pockets for the occupation of the pulpits by the preachers. Now, this question also was never mooted in the Court of Chancery, though I hope it will be ere long; but, until it has been mooted, the Conference has no right to say that the decision has secured the *INALIENABLE* occupation of the pulpits to the preachers. (Hear, hear.) Neither does the decision "recognise the pastoral supervision and authority of Conference as the supreme tribunal of *METHODISM*, through the medium of its district committees." It acknowledges the authority of the Conference as to the pastoral supervision over the *ministers* who are appointed by that Conference; but it does not acknowledge the pastoral authority of Conference as the supreme tribunal of *Methodism*; for, whether a district meeting of preachers could destroy the local authority of a circuit meeting, and so assume this power over *Methodism*, is a question which was not mooted in the Court of Chancery; and I therefore say that these statements are false statements, and altogether beside the question at issue.

Again; I know that there is a great deal of deception throughout the whole of these Minutes of the Conference of 1835. The Conference, in their "Special Address to the Wesleyan Societies," profess to grant concessions; but any one who reads it over will find that it does not grant concessions; that, instead of granting concessions, it extends, in almost every case, the powers of the Conference beyond the limits to which, according to the usage of the preachers, it was previously confined, (Hear, hear.) I here come to a part of the book, containing nearly thirty pages, which professes to grant concessions; but when you come to look into the matter, though you will perhaps be puzzled at first by the peculiar language employed—language obscure enough to confuse any man, and obviously employed for the purpose of raising dust before people's eyes, and prevent them from seeing the points at which the Conference wish to arrive—you will find that, instead of granting concessions, it actually takes from you the liberties which you previously possessed. Something is said, very sarcastically, about "petty and meddling legislation," as instanced with regard to the individuals employed in seeking Methodist reformation. (Hear, hear.) Now, the legislation which is involved in this Special Address of the Conference to the Societies, is, I must say, of all the petty and meddling legislation with which I am acquainted, the most petty and meddling. It is legislation altogether undefined. For instance, all throughout this book we are told of "the essential principles of Methodism," and almost every thing is brought down to the essential principles of Methodism. Now, it is passing strange, that never once throughout the course of these Minutes are we told what these "essential principles of Methodism" are; and, if that is not petty legislation, I do not know what is. No species of legislation can be so petty as that which grants nothing, and lays down principles which it does not attempt to define. Now, this is precisely the species of legislation contained in this book; for, if closely examined, it will be found to grant nothing at all.

I shall proceed to direct your notice more especially to the "Special Address of the Conference to the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in Great Britain." This part of the Minutes contains the concessions alluded to, which are divided into three heads:—1st. Financial affairs; 2d. The expulsion of members; 3d. Meet-

ings for communication with the Conference, by memorial, on subjects of local concern, or on the general laws of the Connexion. The first part relates, as I have just said, to financial affairs. Now, what I particularly wish you to remember here is, that, if these financial affairs were properly regulated—if what the people have demanded, if what the people ought to possess in this respect, were in reality granted to them, this concession would not touch the main point in dispute. Financial affairs are not the affairs which are essential in the question at present agitated throughout the Methodist societies. They form, in some departments, a very powerful and conclusive illustration of the principles of government which the Conference have adopted; but the grand point of dispute as to government, as to the powers which the preachers exercise over the people, and which are declared to be absolute and irresponsible—if these financial affairs were properly regulated by these concessions, which they are not—if every thing was done in this respect that ought to be done, and this were all that was done—still the principal matter would rest untouched, and a reform of this kind would be just as if the people of this country should demand a reform in the House of Commons—a reform which related to the organization of Government itself, and that Government, instead of granting such reform, in order to satisfy the people, were to take off the tax on salt, or collect the Customs in some way different to that in which they had previously been collected. There is one principle only on which these financial affairs should be regulated,—and that is, that the individuals who subscribe to the different funds in the Connexion, should, according to some equitable plan, have a distribution of those funds. (Hear, hear.) That is a plain and fair principle; and if I am asked what I call an equitable plan, I say, a plan which the subscribers themselves agree to—a plan which they consider equitable—a plan fixed to their satisfaction, having been discussed and agreed to by them. Now, something is said in the first page of this Special Address which seems to bear on this very principle. It is said that the preachers have a right to regulate the distribution of these funds—to a considerable extent, at least—because they obtain their money from their friends,—because they preach the sermons by which the money is gained—because they go from house to house, and collect the money at the hands of the subscribers. Now, I cannot see though this might be conceded, that the preachers have established any right to the distribution of the money; much less can I see how that right is equal to the right of the subscribers. I myself, last Sunday evening, preached a sermon for the benefit of a Sunday school in Manchester; but have I, therefore, any right to distribute the money gathered for the benefit of that Sunday school? Surely not; the persons who had that right were the persons in whom the subscribers chose to confide. It is still further asserted, that the preachers could not redeem the pledge which they gave to the persons from whom the money was collected, that their subscriptions should be properly applied, unless they themselves regulated its distribution. Now, if a man came to me and asked for a subscription, if I required him to give me a pledge that it should be properly applied, and he said, “I will see to it myself;” if I knew the man very well—if I was intimately acquainted with his character and conduct, I might consider this as a sufficient pledge; but I should not consider it at all equal to the pledge he would give, were he to say to me, “Why, Sir, you shall see to the distribution of it yourself.” If he gave this pledge, I should then have what I ought to have—an equitable right with the other subscribers to apply the money in the way which seemed best to the individuals most concerned in the matter. The question comes to this—Does the man who collects this money, either by preaching sermons, or in any other way, acquire a right to the distribution of the whole? Scarcely any confusion on this point can arise in any mind. I employ a clerk to collect orders, and pay him for his work,—and this you all know is a parallel case with that of the Methodist preachers,—without meaning the slightest disrespect towards those gentlemen. The Methodist preachers are paid for what they do;—it is part of the work which naturally devolves upon them under the system with which they are connected. I say, not merely that they are paid for it, but I repeat what I said in this place some time ago, though it was much carped at at the time, they are themselves advantaged by it, principally advantaged by it, as the money collected, directly or indirectly, almost always goes into their own pockets. I do not blame them. But I employ a clerk to collect orders for me, and if I pay that clerk to his satisfaction for the work he does, I ask any sensible man whether that clerk, after having collected the orders, and merely because he has done so, has any right to interfere with the general arrangement of the business to which those orders relate? (Hear, hear.) So much for this objection, and it is the only one opposed to the principle for which we are contending. Now to the case of the

circuit stewards, through whose hands the money distributed in the different circuits of the kingdom passes,—to the case of the missionary societies, whose affairs are regulated by a committee of laymen and preachers,—to the case of the Chapel Fund Society, whose affairs are regulated in the same manner, and to the case of the School Fund, whose affairs are also regulated in the same manner. Now there is one thing, and but one thing, to which it is necessary to direct your attention, in order that you may understand the real bearing and effect which such statements as these ought to have. Who are the circuit stewards? The nominees of the preachers. Nobody can be a circuit steward who is not approved of by the preacher. The circuit steward cannot be named by any member or collective number of members in a circuit. Every one knows that the circuit stewards are chosen by the preachers; every one knows that they, with the preachers and a few others, compose the party commonly denominated the preachers' party, and that the manner in which that party has administered the affairs of the body at large has been a constant source of grievance and heart-burnings throughout Methodism. Who chooses the laymen on the Missionary Fund Committee? The Conference alone chooses the members of that committee. The same remark applies to the Chapel Fund Committee, and to the Auxiliary Fund Committee also. We do not get one step farther in having laymen on these committees towards securing the liberties which we ought to possess as subscribers to these funds. The preachers alone take all these matters into their own hands, because they take care to appoint those individuals only who will be subservient to their will. The preachers nominate men, not on account of their natural or spiritual qualifications, but solely on account of their known subservience to the Conferential system. Do you think that if the subscribers to the Missionary Fund were allowed to choose the committee, that committee would ever have dared to appoint the different missionaries agents for a newspaper,—to make them support and promote a certain system of civil politics? (Hear, hear.) Suppose the Bible Society were to try such a system,—to issue a newspaper, and make the agents of the Bible Society agents for that newspaper, how long do you think the subscribers would stand that? (Hear, hear.) Then as to the Chapel Fund Committee, I could bring instances in which the committee have prohibited the adoption of plans which might entirely have relieved the chapels of this kingdom from debt, those plans being based on the principle of popular interference. (Hear, hear.) Not one word is said here about the BOOK COMMITTEE.

The principal part of this portion of the Minutes relates to another fund, and with regard to this fund it was said that considerable concessions were intended to be made. I wish to direct your particular attention to the new regulations which are to be applied to the fund to which I allude, that is, the Contingent Fund. I do so, not so much for the purpose of informing you of the facts of the case, as for the purpose of detecting throughout this legislative enactment what the principle is on which the Conference acts. The Contingent Fund is supplied by the yearly collection and the July collection, and it is here said that at the time of the Conference a certain sum of money is portioned out of this fund to the different districts in the kingdom, and afterwards distributed in such circuits of those districts which stand in need of assistance, by the preachers in connexion with the circuit stewards. This portioning of money is applied to what are called in Methodist language ordinary deficiencies; but there is another part of this Contingent Fund, which never has been, in any form or shape, connected with the people in its distribution. I allude to what is applied to the so called *extraordinary* deficiencies. (Hear, hear.) One of these extraordinary deficiencies is the sum of £100 to Mr. George Marsden for a journey to Canada, and another £100 to Mr. Grindrod for a journey of the same kind. There are other items of deficiencies due to different special district meetings, held in various places throughout the kingdom, for the purpose of keeping the people down. (Hear, hear.) It is said, however, that in future, the people shall have to do with this fund, and distribute the extraordinary, as well as the ordinary deficiencies. How? In the first place it is said, that a certain number of districts shall send delegates to Conference, in order to assist in the distribution of this money. Who is to choose those districts? That is the question which any man of common sense will first ask. The Conference is to choose them, and the Conference has had the want of wit to tell the principle on which it will choose them. Fifteen laymen are to be "annually chosen from the districts which are most contiguous to the place where the Conference is to be held, or from which it is likely that laymen of *suitable leisure and information* may be *induced* to attend the ensuing Conference." Thus a certain number of districts are to send delegates; the Conference will choose those districts, picking them out as containing men of *suitable leisure and information*,—that is, *suitable* for their

purposes, of course; who may be induced, i. e. who the Conference know will be induced, to attend! And how are these districts to choose the delegates? Why, by the circuit stewards exclusively. (Hear, hear.) At the time of the May district meetings, these circuit stewards are to make choice of an individual in the district to which they belong, as a delegate to regulate all matters connected with the contingent fund, in conjunction with the president and secretary of Conference and fifteen preachers. Now, I ask again, who are the circuit stewards? Are they not the nominees of the preachers? Of course they are; and, therefore, I say that the people have not advanced one step towards the proper regulation of their financial affairs. Every one who knows any thing about Methodist district meetings, knows that it seldom happens that more than two, three, or five stewards are present, and that these are generally the mere creatures of the preachers. If it had been said that the quarterly meetings might choose the delegates, it would have been something; but, inasmuch as these circuit stewards are to choose them, nothing has been granted to the people. Another question which arises, is, as to what these men are to do when they get to the Conference? We are told that they are to assemble together before the Conference, in order to manage these matters about ordinary and extraordinary deficiencies; and that they are to assemble again, *after* the close of the Conference, in order to finish what they began at the commencement. I am sure you must immediately see that the object is to prevent the delegates from doing any thing at all. These gentlemen, of suitable leisure and information, are to come at the beginning of the Conference to regulate this matter, as far as the preachers will permit; they are then to stop a fortnight or three weeks, in order to spend another half day in finishing what they have begun. The Conference say, "That the same committee, or such members of it as can conveniently be present, (they do not want them all, you see: oh dear, no!) shall be the committee of distribution, who shall meet at the close of each Conference, or as soon as the stations of the preachers shall have been finally settled; for the purpose of allotting to each district its fair and necessary share, according to its means and probable expenditure, of the gross sum which they may deem it proper to devote, out of the estimated income of the ensuing year, to the payment of ordinary deficiencies in the circuits. At this final meeting they shall also complete the settlement of the extraordinaries for the past year." This committee, as you have already heard, is to be composed of fifteen preachers and fifteen laymen; they are to meet at the beginning of Conference, and, if they can, again at the end, to *complete* the business. Now, how many of the fifteen laymen do you suppose will stop till the end of the Conference? Perhaps two! Thus you have fifteen preachers and two laymen to regulate the affairs of this contingent fund. The language of the Minutes on this subject is very much involved; but it does not appear to me that any thing more is granted to this committee than the power of overlooking, approving, confirming, and establishing what the Conference may have seen fit to do, prior to their assembling together. There is, however, brethren, one advantage connected with this new arrangement of financial affairs, and it is an advantage which strikes my mind as being one of very considerable importance. The constitution of this committee is indeed a very queer sort of representation and delegation; but this sending up of people from the districts to Conference is, it must be confessed, something like lay delegation. (Hear, hear.) It looks something like it, and I am quite confident that the principles of the Grand Central Association, or, as it is now, with greater propriety, called, the Wesleyan-Methodist Association, in time will find their way through the mass of the Methodist body, and the period will very soon come when Conference will not be able to find a committee of gentlemen entirely subservient to their will. (Hear, hear.) These men have a right to come to Conference—they have something to manage there; and I have no doubt that, as truth spreads through the societies, as it becomes better understood, and fixes its roots deeper in the hearts of the people, the Conference will begin to find this committee a very unmanageable body with respect to the Contingent Fund as well as with respect to other matters. This arrangement is, indeed, but the shadow of lay-delegation; but I am disposed to take it on the principle that "coming events cast their shadows *before*." (Applause.) I now come, brethren, to the second part of the Special Address of the Conference to the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies; and to this part of the address I solicit your particular attention, because it is not, like the former, a mere arrangement about financial affairs, but does touch the principle of the thing—does relate to this point of absolute and irresponsible government, as claimed and exercised by the preachers.

(To be continued.)



## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

**LIVERPOOL.**—The Association has acquired an increase of fifty-seven members, and a proportionate augmentation of funds during the last quarter.

**LOSTWITHIEL.**—"Mr. John Robinson, superintendent at Camelford, forcibly broke open a chapel at Port Isaac, on the 13th ult.; and I apprehend there will be serious work in that quarter during the present year. Several reform local preachers from this circuit intend to employ themselves on their vacant Sundays, on the Camelford ground."—*From a correspondent.*

**BOLTON.**—The Rev. James Lamb will deliver a lecture here on Friday next. Mr. Livesey is expected to take the chair.

**GLASGOW.**—The Wesleyan Methodist Association here have resolved to act with the Liverpool and Manchester committee, and are anxious for a deputation from England before they adopt extensive and vigorous plans of operation.

**MANCHESTER.**—The members and friends of the Wesleyan Methodist Association have determined upon erecting a Tabernacle in Salford, sufficiently capacious to accommodate several hundred persons. A convenient site has been chosen, and the building will be proceeded with immediately. When will the infatuated Conference preachers, and their rich and worldly-minded supporters regain their senses? There are fifty preachers on the Manchester Association Plan.

In the Minutes of Conference just published, no fewer than 309 lines are occupied in votes of thanks to committees, officers, friends for donations, counsel in the recent Chancery suits, the circuits which have published declarations of attachment to Methodism as it is, &c. &c. *Christian Advocate.*

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## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

**LIVERPOOL.**—The Association has acquired an increase of fifty-seven members, and a proportionate augmentation of funds during the last quarter.

**LOSTWITHIEL.**—"Mr. John Robinson, superintendent at Camelford, forcibly broke open a chapel at Port Isaac, on the 13th ult.; and I apprehend there will be serious work in that quarter during the present year. Several reform local preachers from this circuit intend to employ themselves on their vacant Sundays, on the Camelford ground."—*From a correspondent.*

**BOLTON.**—The Rev. James Lamb will deliver a lecture here on Friday next. Mr. Livesey is expected to take the chair.

**GLASGOW.**—The Wesleyan Methodist Association here have resolved to act with the Liverpool and Manchester committee, and are anxious for a deputation from England before they adopt extensive and vigorous plans of operation.

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ously obtained Mr. Sumner's consent. Of course, the trustees paid no attention to this proposal, and, by acting strictly upon the terms of the injunction clandestinely obtained by Mr. Sumner, who had previously pledged himself not to have recourse to legal proceedings, they have placed the preachers in an awkward predicament.

"We understand (says the *Christian Advocate*) that the Rochdale affair is telling tremendously against Conference tyranny. The preachers begin bitterly to deplore the trap into which, unwittingly, poor young Percival Bunting has led them, in procuring, at a large expense, an *ex-parte* injunction. It is confidently asserted that they are themselves using every effort to induce the Vice-Chancellor to remove it. Their temporary triumph is a complete defeat! The public mind is becoming daily more and more indignant at the persecuting spirit of the Conference party."

The general reader cannot but feel indignant at the attempt of the preachers, under the pretence of church discipline, to establish a system of taxation without representation, contrary to the genius of the British constitution. A pious mind revolts at the wretched quibbling by which they would fain nullify the legitimate power of a leaders' meeting—to the dissatisfaction, not to the "*satisfaction*" of more than a "*majority*" of its members—in violation of the contract between the parties in 1797. The Conference solemnly ratified that contract, and they ought, in common honesty, however favourable to the people, to fulfil its conditions. Let them do what is right, and leave the consequences to God. Were men in the commercial world to act so dishonourably as to deny their own hand-writing, in order to circumvent their neighbours and obtain a personal advantage in matters connected with their "moneys and their usances," in like manner as the preachers stoutly deny, for sake of self-interest, the genuineness and authenticity of the rules published by their own authority, they would be hooted from the Rialto with scorn and contempt. This subject was ably illustrated by Messrs. Livesey, Farrer, and Rowland, at Rochdale, to whose unanswerable arguments, of which a very imperfect sketch will be found in the following pages, we beg to call the attention of our readers.

#### SIMULTANEOUS MEETINGS OF THE ROCHDALE METHODIST REFORMERS.

(Abridged from the *Christian Advocate*.)

The trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Rochdale having been prevented from holding a public meeting on their own premises, the Baptist Chapel, and a church in which Lady Huntingdon's Connexion hold their meetings for public worship, were promptly opened to them, and instead of having one meeting they held two. The following is an abridged report of the proceedings in the Baptist Chapel:—

Mr. JAMES LIVESY, of Bury, a venerable and consistent member of the Methodist Society, presided over this meeting. After singing and prayer,

The CHAIRMAN rose, and, after a few preliminary remarks, said,—I remember very well that when I became a local preacher we made out our own plans: no travelling preacher interfered in our arrangements; we went to break up fresh ground, in which to sow the seed of righteousness; and I must be allowed to say, that many of those places we commenced have now very respectable chapels, attended by numerous congregations. I mean not to say that this was the common usage then, only that it was our usage, and that with regard to the local preachers, no man said to them, "Whence comest thou?" or "Whither goest thou?"

We had the whole under our own influence, independently of the itinerants. Again; all who have been connected with the body any considerable number of years, must recollect that the character of leaders' meetings is quite changed from former usage. The document, printed in 1798, in which it is asserted, that "no member shall be expelled from our body without the consent of a majority of the leaders," was, very recently,—so recently as the last Conference at Sheffield,—lent to Mr. Eckett, of London, and the person who lent it, told him that Mr. James Wood, the father of the Conference, had given it to him when he entered the society. I ask, now, whether it is likely or not that that venerable character understood the law and usages of Methodism? This document was reprinted in the year 1800. Mr. VEVERS, in his pamphlet, has asserted, that it was spurious,—that the Conference never recognised it, and that the publisher, George Storey, who was the editor of the Book-room, had no authority to print it. If this be so, I would ask, whether it is likely that Mr. James Wood would have ventured to have placed that very document in the hands of any member just entering the Society for his rule and government? But perhaps Mr. VEVERS was not aware that the same rule had been published some years previously to 1800 by authority; and yet he now comes forward, in the face of all the world, and tells us it was *never* authorized! I leave any discerning mind to its own comments upon this fact. I was very intimately acquainted with Mr. M'DONALD, who once laboured in the Rochdale Circuit, and he said to me in 1797, at the very time the rule was made, "We have given up nearly all the power into your hands; we can neither take in nor expel a member without first having the consent of the leaders." I leave you, my Christian friends, to decide whether this gentleman's authority is to go for any thing or not,—he was afterwards appointed an editor of the Book-room. An objection was made in 1797 to the venerable James Wood that the Minutes of that year were not satisfactory. "Oh," he replied, "be quiet till next Conference, and they will give you every satisfaction!"—and as a redemption of that pledge, this document was printed the year after. With this statement I leave any man to judge whether it was not intended to govern our Societies by this rule. I am astonished at the pains that have been taken to make it appear that this document had no authority. All the trouble so taken I consider like children's play, for the circumstances are too strong to be controverted. I have now great pleasure in introducing to you our venerable friend Dr. WARREN. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. WARREN.—MR. Chairman and Christian Friends,—I was just thinking of an expression which the Conference in their Minutes, which I have in my hand, have adopted a sort of congratulation to themselves at the comparative success with which the struggle in which they have been engaged has issued. They quote that beautiful passage of St. Paul, that "the things which have happened have turned out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel."—*Minutes*, page 292. Now, I really think that *we* may adopt that language with some little effect, and very considerable truth, this night, in respect of this place and the one at a little distance. We all expected to have been inclosed within the walls of one house. The stronger than ourselves, however, put forth their might, and they determined we should not enjoy the accommodation of our own house. We bowed to their wise authority, when they appealed to the strong arm of the law; the law for a time having required that we should yield. Is this conduct on the part of those who oppose us an indication that their cause is good? If it were, why not honourably let it be brought before the British public? [Here the speaker forcibly alluded to the inconsistency of the preachers in censuring him (Dr. Warren) for appealing to the Vice-Chancellor, and afterwards following his example; he then continued:—]

And now, one or two words with regard to "essential principles." There is a passage in the 113th page which talks about "essential principles" and "fundamental regulations." "With respect to the *essential principles* and fundamental regulations of our established discipline, we are unanimously and deliberately resolved, in the fear of God, and on the most conscientious conviction of duty, to *make no change whatever*,"—that is to say, the Conference is sensible of their judgment being infallible; that no light they have ever yet been able to get, nor any they expect, will ever induce them to make any alteration in their principles and regulations! I ought to have said that it is somewhat difficult to find from this book what their "essential principles" are; they certainly talk about them again and again, and refer you to some documents or other, but they nowhere specify what these "essential principles" are. I will, therefore, take the liberty of mentioning two or three of them. The first is, "that the judgment of Con-

ference is infallible." The second is, "that Conference discipline is perfect, and needs no amendment." A third is, and it is plain and obvious to all who have read their documents, and noticed their conduct, that the preachers say in plain language, "We will govern, and you, the people, shall submit." Well, then, "liberal concessions" are talked about; and you will have an opportunity of seeing what "liberality" there is on the part of the Conference, and of seeing how much is really conceded to the people along with these large professions.—[After contrasting the professions of the present Conference with those of Mr. Wesley upon this and other points, the Doctor adverted to Mr. Wesley's advice with regard to the building of chapels, and commented at considerable length on the Plan of Pacification. He then proceeded:—]

Then, there was another proposition, which was, I believe, with some degree of modesty; concealed, till the Association made manifest the hidden things of darkness. It was not, I believe, thought of generally, even by the preachers themselves, that it was to be contended for, that they (the preachers) should have absolute power. I believe, that many of the preachers themselves, did not imagine such powers were in abeyance according to the principles of the Methodist constitution. Here I would ask a question which some of the Conference would, perhaps, deem it humiliating to answer,—Who made them preachers? I answer, that they are indebted for their being raised to the ennobling and important situation of preaching the Gospel to the suffrages of the people. I next ask who has given to Conference that power which they say is absolute, and which, they further say, they are determined to exercise, independently of the people? I maintain, that the people have given it them. The power which they exercise with regard to Methodist laws, is not one of inherent right, but one only conceded to them by the people, although many of them are too haughty to acknowledge the fact. I ask, in the third place, who supports them in that power and influence which they possess? The people. Yet many of you must be aware that the people who conceded their power to the preachers, and who support them in their situations, have recently, and of late years, been treated by them with *hauteur*; that is, the lower and middle classes have been so treated, and often in the most unpleasant manner. Methodism, as at present administered, says to the people, first, "Say your prayers!" secondly, "Pay your money!" thirdly, "Do as you are bid!" and next, "Ask no questions!" These expressions may seem somewhat harsh, but they are the truth of the case. In allusion to arbitrary expulsions, the Doctor said—Show me the man of ten, twenty, thirty, even of forty years' standing in the Society, who is interested in the progress of Christian freedom; that man may be a useful, laborious, and consistent preacher of the word of truth; that man, I say, may be expelled from a Christian community, for no other crime, by the absolute power and authority of perhaps a junior superintendent, although all the class leaders, who ought to have sat in judgment upon him, protest against the sentence. I say this is indeed hazardous character in the most awful manner; and when this power becomes felt, no man of common sense will, I think, trust himself in any section of religionists constituted as Methodism now is. After throwing back upon the Conference the charge of using bad language, brought against the Association, the Doctor thus proceeded: I will just advert to a statement which I believe has been circulated in this neighbourhood, by an individual who might have had the means of knowing better, if he chose; namely, that "where the Association has been introduced by its members, and branches have been formed, the work of true conversion is staid, and there is an end of spiritual improvement." This was also said with particular reference to Hull, "That, as soon as the Association visited that town, conversions, which used to take place, ceased in the Old Connexion." Now, I beg leave to say, and I have the fact from an official person at Hull, that never were conversions more remarkable or more numerous, for many years, than they have lately been there, under the ministration of the Wesleyan Association. The last letter I had from Hull, which is about a week ago, describes that on Sunday before last no fewer than from sixteen to twenty persons found peace with God, that in the three or four days previously forty persons had found peace, and that upon the Sunday before, Divine service in the Tabernacle, which began at half-past ten in the morning, was protracted, in consequence of spiritual influence from above having descended upon the congregation, till eleven at night, without the people withdrawing to refresh themselves. At Manchester the same spirit is showing itself as remarkably. The crowded houses we have from Sabbath to Sabbath are for nothing more remarkable than for the spiritual and holy influence that rests upon our exertions. They who have felt it have acknowledged

it. Upon such occasions we carefully abstain from exposing the great blemishes in Methodism as it is; nothing of this sort is heard amongst us when we are met for worship; nothing is heard but plain, simple, powerful preaching of Christ, and him crucified. If there are to be any scurrilous anathemas, it shall not be amongst us, but amongst those who oppose us. We are acting upon this principle, and God is honouring our ministry. We have now fifty local preachers upon our plan, and above thirty places of worship in Manchester and the neighbourhood, and still there is want of room. Three or four other tabernacles are about being reared. Never, I believe, did Methodism wear a more extraordinary aspect in point of spirituality, and in point of conversions, than it does at this moment amongst us. That it is not so on the other side may be accounted for on principles which you can imagine as well as if I suggested them.—The worthy Doctor then sat down amidst great applause.

Mr. RICHARD FARRER, after a few introductory observations, said,—I conceive that a part of the Christian's common law, as laid down in the New Testament, is this, that the church, meaning thereby an assembly of teachers and of people, shall decide upon every thing connected with that church. I assert that the conditions of the covenant entered into between the Methodist people and the preachers have been broken. In that misty volume to which the venerable Doctor so ably referred you, namely, the Minutes of Conference for this year, there occurs this sentence, or rather part of a paragraph:—

"The officers of society who have united in the Association have done so in direct violation of their engagements and obligations. When the leaders and local preachers are admitted to their respective trusts, they assent to the discipline of the Connexion; place themselves under its authority; and bind themselves to a strict and conscientious observance of all its rules. No injury had been done to the men who have thus betrayed the trust reposed in them; *no invasion of their rights and liberties is alleged.*" Now, this is not true. We do allege an invasion of our rights and liberties.

"The economy remained as it was when they entered upon their respective offices; and yet, in a moment of temptation, many were induced to place themselves in hostility to the system they were pledged to obey and support."—*Conference Minutes*, p. 174.

I was obliged to read this in order to show that the ground we have taken is a just and righteous position, and that what is stated in this book is false. In the first place, I will endeavour to prove that the statement is false with reference to England. I hold in my hand a copy of certain Rules, to which the Doctor has referred, published in 1800, by "George Storey, at the Conference Office, London." I have seen the original copy of them, as printed in 1798, and they both agree in every particular. In this document it is stated that

"No leader or steward shall be expelled the society, but by a majority of the leaders or stewards, nor until he has been found guilty by a majority at a leaders' meeting."

The Conference say that this document was published without any authority of theirs, and that it was not the meaning of the law conceded in 1797, "that the guilt of any member must be proved to the satisfaction of a leaders' meeting." Now, these laws were not only published in 1800 and 1798, but the person publishing them was the very servant of the Conference; and, as he had served them, of course would have received thanks or censure as Conference judged fit. There is no evidence of George Storey having been censured, and the inference is that he had done right. The rules I allude to were published immediately after the concessions of 1797, of which you have heard so much. They were published, too, at a time when the thing was better understood; when the consideration of them, whether they were right or wrong, must have been distinctly in the mind of every preacher who was in the Conference. Now, does there appear, either in 1798 or 1799, a censure upon the books of the Methodist Conference of the conduct of those servants who had so grievously betrayed their trust as to give to the world one of the "essential principles" of Methodism? No such thing. So far from that being the case, in 1800 another edition of the Rules came out, precisely the same as the former; and from that day to this, in none of the intermediate periods, has there been any vote of censure upon the persons who published it, or any notice whatever taken of the circumstance. And this is the very thing which has called up all the agitation, and disturbance, and vexation, which now exist. Can it by any possibility be supposed, that, if the publication of these Rules had been a violation of the "essential principles" of Methodism, it would have been overlooked? The idea is ridiculous. The next proof that this is a genuine document, and that it comprises the sense and meaning of what Conference did in 1797, will appear by a work written by the Rev. Mr. Macdonald, in 1804. That preacher having had seven years to consider of



what he had assisted to do in 1797, wrote a book, from which it appears that he had changed his mind as to the propriety of what he had done in 1797. Having changed his mind, he was not, therefore, likely to publish any thing that would militate against what was actually intended afterwards to be the case. What does he write?—

“The Conference, for the sake of peace, conceded to the clamorous faction who call themselves the people (that is, in 1797,) one degree of authority after another till they put it out of their own power to dismiss a leader from office without the sanction of a leaders’ meeting; or to take a preacher, however qualified, into connexion, if the majority of the quarterly meetings should otherwise determine. The leaders’ meetings are constituted judges of themselves without the interference of the preachers in their decisions.”

Now observe, that, although this gentleman had changed his mind, he still gives evidence upon our side of the question, which evidence I hold incontrovertible.

After dwelling at considerable length on this point, Mr. Farrar continued,—In a publication sent out by Conference, it is said, “We now turn to the members of the society, and ask if they enjoy not a state of real Christian liberty, and whether we have the power to infringe that liberty.” Infringement of liberty! Will any man tell me that if the Methodist Conference choose at this moment to take away the cup of the Holy Sacrament, whether there is any power on earth to prevent them? If there be such a power, I know not where it rests. They can take away the cup or the bread, or both, if they choose; and they can hold the chapels and preach what they like. And it was just, as any man knows who has read church history, when the church attained to this point, that the ministry claimed and exercised the very same species of power which the Methodist Conference now claims, and is beginning to introduce, first with one corruption and then with another. The Methodist Conference is composed of several hundred preachers. These men are so got together that the most part of them know very little of the business of Conference; and the power, therefore, of necessity, falls into a few hands, who are acquainted with all the details of the Connexion. This Conference meets with five hundred men at a time. It sits for three weeks with closed doors. It holds itself responsible to none but God. In its meetings it tampers with the private characters of men. It interferes with public questions. It interferes with questions of state. It may be that it was no great evil for it to interfere in reference to slavery, though my opinion was that it was not right, and for this reason, that it was no business of the Methodist Conference; its duty is to station preachers, to receive and expel members of their own body, and not to attempt dictation on questions of state. They proceeded from this question of slavery, which was comparatively harmless, to the connexion between Church and State, and who shall say what they will next proceed to? They met, five hundred of them, for three weeks together within closed doors, and they can introduce subjects entirely foreign to their business as a Wesleyan Methodist Conference. Have you ever recollected that this is the only public body of men in the kingdom sitting with closed doors? Is there any other body that does this? The Houses of Parliament sit with open doors. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland sit with open doors. The Synod of Ulster sits with open doors. There is, indeed, no body of men within the dominions of the King of England, that I know of, sitting with closed doors, except the Methodist Conference. Five hundred men, sitting for three weeks together with closed doors, is in direct defiance, whether of the “essential principles” of Methodism or not, of one essential principle of Christianity, which requires that the proceedings of every Christian man ought to be of a free, open, and undisguised character. And what is the result of this sitting of five hundred men for three weeks together within closed doors? It is that they send out their emissaries with secret instructions—that they are all disciplined as if by another Ignatius Loyola—that every man is noted if he is on their side, and if he be not he is marked. These men have access to a countless number of families, and if a man, in any circuit, incurs their displeasure for any liberal conduct, he may as well expatriate himself at once; and there are some men in this house who can testify, if they choose, that they have been for many years martyrs to this secret work. This Conference influences, in various ways, in England alone, a million and a half, or two millions of people. It is the only body sitting with closed doors that claims irresponsible and irresistible power. Every thing else is reformed, save the Methodist Conference. We are now really represented in the Commons’ House of Parliament. We are most of us likely soon to be represented in our various local governments through the passing of the Municipal Corporation Bill. Our magistrates and

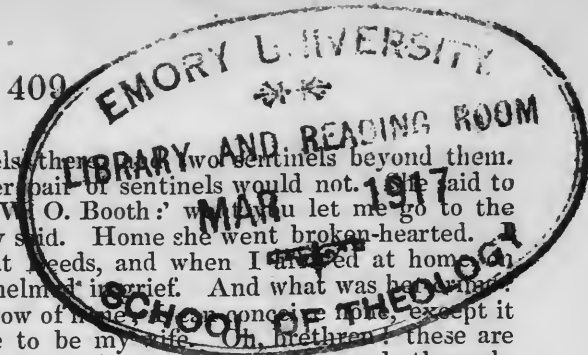
councils will become responsible to public opinion; their conduct must be open to the light, according to the genius of Christianity and the genius of British law. The only institution permitted to be enveloped in darkness and in shame,—the only one which fears that its conduct should be open to the light of day, is the Methodist Conference, whose proceedings are shrouded in midnight darkness. Yet this very body in their Minutes say, that its business, its end and aim, is to spread the light of Scripture and of Christianity throughout the length and breadth of the land! What an anomaly! Darkness and Christianity!

Mr. DAVID ROWLAND, of Liverpool, said, in rising to address this very numerous, and, as I am happy to perceive, remarkably serious and attentive audience, I must be permitted to make a preliminary observation. It is this. I beg, at the very outset, to charge home the whole and entire responsibility arising from the present state of the Methodist Connexion, of the consequences which have already resulted, and which will inevitably result,—these I solemnly charge upon the heads of the preachers of the Methodist Conference. I rest my argument on their scorn, their contempt, and their unjustifiable treatment of the body of delegates who recently met in Sheffield. I am not unaware of the difficulty and the responsibility of the situation of a person occupying the position I now fill. I feel, and I should be ashamed of myself if I did not feel,—for I have been a Methodist from boyhood,—all my associations, all my feelings, all my best affections are wound up in Methodism,—and I am sure there is not a correct and pure mind in this large assembly who can contemplate the past, and look at the present, and calculate upon the future, who does not also feel,—the difficulty we must be under upon such occasions as this, of restraining our feelings. And yet, after all, the cause of truth, of justice, the cause of Methodism, its perpetuity, its prosperity, its triumphs in after ages over sin, death, and hell, are not to be tampered with; and when we find its interests in jeopardy; when we find the cause of truth, of civil and religious liberty at stake, we are bound, as Englishmen, as Christians, to stand forward and ask, if those principles and that conduct which has brought the Connexion into its present state, are to be continued? I know very well that it is urged to us, “You pain the preachers, their friends, and many pious minds, by the steps you are taking.” I am sensible of the fact. The preachers, and all on their side, cannot but be pained at having the truth,—and especially such truths as we are furnished with,—stated in the presence of hundreds and thousands of the Methodist people, and more particularly when these truths are not to be confined within the limits of these walls, or to the ears of this large assembly. These truths are necessary to be known. But allow me to ask, what is that pain which is so much dreaded and deprecated? Is it the pain of remorse for what the Conference preachers have been doing during the last nine or twelve months? Is it on account of the wrongs, the injuries, and the oppressions that they have inflicted upon the Connexion? Is it on account of the injustice they have perpetrated upon the great cause of civil and religious liberty, not only in this country, but throughout the world? Where are the tokens of such remorse? Where are the evidences of such repentance? Where are the records of their pain? I have read over their last Minutes. I have carefully perused their three Addresses to the members of the Society, and I seriously protest that, in none of them, have I been able to discover the slightest trace of any such feeling. Have they, in any shape, made reparation for the manifold wrongs, the gratuitous insults which they have inflicted upon that venerable, pious, useful, and consistent minister of our Lord Jesus Christ who lately addressed you—the Rev. Dr. Warren? No. I ask again, can you point out to me the record in these Minutes of the proceedings of Conference, of any censure or admonition for the unwarrantable and un-Christian liberties they have taken with Dr. Warren’s private character and name? No, they have done no such thing. And yet, if you look through their Minutes, you will find that instead of rebuking these men for their un-Christian and un-pastoral conduct, they have been rewarding them with the very best circuits they could give them in the kingdom. You Rochdale people, some seven or eight years ago, were rather troublesome to Conference; you had some old-fashioned notions in your head, notions in which I participated, though I resided at Liverpool, and others lived in other places,—but distance made no difference in our sentiments. Our notion was this, and we never dreamt of any thing the reverse, that Wesleyan Methodists, all over the world, constituted one great family.

Mr. Rowland then commented in severe terms, and with great animation, on the absurdity of the law, “Let no man, or number of men, in our Connexion, on

any account, write or circulate letters, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, until it has first received the sanction of Conference,"—and thus continued:—Now I come to that particular circumstance to which Mr. Farrer alluded, as furnishing another strong and irresistible evidence, that, up to the year 1825, the preachers themselves understood the law securing the official rights of leaders and private members, in the way we contend it should be maintained. We had, at that time, in Liverpool, one circuit and one leaders' meeting for the whole Society. A very old and excellent leader had rendered himself obnoxious to the superintendent, who, at the close of the meeting, rose up and pronounced these words:—"I expel Peter M'Clintock from the Methodist Society!" This sentence came upon all of us like a clap of thunder. The good man himself, under feelings of strong excitement, was in the very act of laying down his class-book. I perceived what he was after, and, though a young man, I thought I knew what were a leader's rights. I therefore said to him, "Brother, do not do that; take care of your class-book; you are not expelled, nor can you be, except by the vote of a majority of this meeting." Two or three weeks passed over, and then the local preachers' meeting arrived. When the superintendent came to the name of "David Rowland," with great solemnity, and with becoming dignity, he pronounced these words:—"I suspend brother Rowland from his office of local preacher!" "For what?" cried the whole meeting indignantly; "what is his crime?" Now mark his words, for they will show you how thoroughly imbued this man was with the most preposterous notions as to his ministerial rights. "For interfering with my prerogative as superintendent of this circuit," was Mr. Wood's reply. We drew up a memorial to Conference, which received no fewer than eighty-seven official signatures. The Conference sent a deputation to Liverpool, to hear, upon the spot, all the circumstances of the case; and to decide accordingly. I wish you to pay particular attention to the names of the deputation; for you will find they composed what is now called the ruling party. The first name was that of the Rev. Jabez Bunting; then followed those of the Rev. Robert Newton, the Rev. George Marsden, the Rev. John Gaulter, the Rev. Joseph Entwisle, and, I am not so clear upon the next, but I think the Rev. Richard Reece was also one. Of this preacher I am not certain; but I am positive that I am correct as to all the others. We were all convened in the body of Mount-pleasant Chapel, and the case was gone into. The result of their deliberations on all the facts of the case was, "That Thomas Wood had broken the law; that brother M'Clintock had been illegally expelled; and that brother Rowland had been illegally suspended." The expelled leader was, consequently, restored, and my own suspension was removed. That was a troublesome affair after all. It was found exceedingly annoying that leaders should have so much power: it was well enough for the Methodist people to have the privilege of meeting in, or leading a class, or occupying seats in the chapel, and paying for them, or supporting their ministry in respectability and comfort. You might even have the privilege of indulging your own private thoughts; but it had become a questionable point with the preachers whether you ought to have the privilege of speaking your thoughts. It was, therefore, desirable to change the state of things, and the determination was taken, that, at the first fitting opportunity the whole Connexion should be dispossessed of the right. That occurrence took place at Leeds. Some of those very gentlemen who only two years before had decided that Thomas Wood had violated the laws of the Connexion, went to Leeds, and there pronounced that Edmund Grindrod had done his duty! Both Thomas Wood and Edmund Grindrod were equally guilty; they had both trampled upon the legal rights of the officials in the Connexion, yet one man was censured and the other applauded! And in the Conference following, they gave their solemn sanction to the illegal and cruel decision of the Leeds preacher—thus breaking faith with the public, and trampling under foot the solemn engagements they themselves had entered into with the people in 1797. I say, then, that the Methodist Connexion cannot, that it ought not, that it must not, that it will never know quiet until the injuries that were perpetrated by these men at Leeds are redressed, and restitution made to them as far as it is in the power of Conference.

Mr. Rowland then entered at some length into the history of the Leeds case; and having alluded to the expulsion of Mr. John Whittingham for not subscribing to the annual collection, thus continued:—"But I have a worse case even than that. It concerns a very near relation of mine: she had been a Methodist from childhood, and a leader for sixteen years. She had not joined the Association. She was in possession of her quarterly ticket. She went one Sunday and presented herself as a candidate for the holy communion, but the passage was



blockaded. There were two sentinels there, and two sentinels beyond them. The first let her pass, but the other pair of sentinels would not. She said to them, "Here is my ticket, signed 'W. O. Booth:' will you let me go to the table of my Lord?"—"No, no!" they said. Home she went broken-hearted. It was away that Sabbath, preaching at Leeds, and when I arrived at home on Monday morning, I found her overwhelmed in grief. And what was her grief? No offence was imputed to her. I know of none, except it be this, that she had the misfortune to be my wife. Oh, brethren! these are awful things. These are solemn facts. I am of opinion that if the people throughout the Connexion were but informed of them, they would rise up as one man. I would not give a six months' purchase for the tenure of the existence of Conference, if the people were informed of the oppressions and illegalities perpetrated in the different circuits by superintendents and preachers, all of which have been solemnly sanctioned by Conference. Allusion has been made to the public notice which Conference has lately been attracting by their proceedings; and I shall be much mistaken if the position it has now taken does not attract still greater attention. I shall be much mistaken if, whilst searching reforms are going on through all the institutions of the land, civil and religious, the Methodist Conference be allowed to sit with closed doors, and sentinels, and guards, for many years longer. Will free-born Englishmen submit to such laws as destroy their dearest rights, from such a body, when "Freedom! Freedom!" is the cry of every Christian and of every Briton? Oh! depend upon it that the position Conference has taken will have an important bearing upon our civil liberties,—a view not yet taken, and not yet considered. I call upon you, my friends in Rochdale, to oppose and resist this oppression of the preachers. I call upon you not to submit to it, if you retain any regard for Christian freedom, for the holy principles of the Gospel.

Mr. HUGHES, of Manchester, gave the history of his own expulsion.

The doxology was then sung; and a blessing having been asked by the Rev. Dr. Warren, the meeting separated at half-past eleven o'clock.

The meeting in St. Stephen's Church was equally crowded. The gentlemen who spoke in the Baptist Chapel delivered addresses there, and at eleven o'clock they separated. The sensation in Rochdale was exceedingly great.

#### PROCEEDINGS AT BOLTON.

On Friday evening, the 9th instant, according to announcement, the Rev. J. Lamb, delivered a lecture on the present state of Methodism, in the Chapel of the Refugees. We have procured, by mere chance, the following imperfect report of some of the points submitted to the public on this occasion. A very considerable portion of Mr. Lamb's time was occupied in exposing the mis-named improvements made by the late Conference, in regard to the power retained by the superintendents, to expel from Society men who, having committed no moral crime, are yet made the victims of "Methodism as it is." We were unable to obtain a report of this part of the lecture, but we understand the expression of feeling which it elicited was very decided indeed.

Whatever may be the personal feeling of regret with which I, or my friends, appearing before you on the present occasion, may labour under, there are certain considerations which counteract this regret, if not altogether, yet do so to a certain extent. There is something consoling, for instance, in the reflection that we are advocates for reform in our own Church particularly, and friends to religious liberty universally. On the present occasion, I shall principally direct your attention to some of those leading evils of Methodism, which we wish to see reformed, and of which reform, I may add, we are not without hope.

We complain, in the first place, of the *absolute* form of government by which the Wesleyan community is now kept in bondage. The *Conference* is the source of law to this community. Now to a person not acquainted with the nature of a Methodist Conference, it may require a little explanation as to the constitution of this Conference. You might, for instance, suppose that by the Conference, you were to understand a number of the people, and an equal number of the ministers, assembled in one place in order to deliberate and conclude upon those various prudential institutions by which so extensive a Connexion should be regulated. This would certainly be the conclusion of a person not intimately acquainted with the economy of Methodism. But this would not be a correct



opinion, for no layman, however respectable for standing in the church, for piety, for intelligence, integrity, &c. is allowed to enter the precincts of the supreme and legislative court of Methodism. Not only so, but out of the 800 ministers belonging to this body of Christians, there are but some six or seven who are the virtual law-makers for a million of British Christians. How long this will be submitted to, in *this* country, and in these times, it is for you to say.

Over the acts of these *irresponsible* legislators the people have no control, so long as they continue members of this community. The laws made by this coterie of priests are intended to be like the laws of the Medes and Persians. Intended, I say, but whether they will maintain their perpetuity, and perpetuate the infallibility of these Solons, time, that great explainer of all things, must declare. You will perhaps see with what propriety the people complain of the despotism sought to be established by the Conference, when I tell you, and prove to you, that the members of this community are not permitted ever to complain, or memorialize, on the subject of the laws by which they are governed! That they may not not complain, is evident from this fact, that if in any circuit, or in any society, a few of the people, feeling themselves aggrieved and oppressed, should call a meeting for the purpose of expressing their opinions, they are liable to be indicted, tried, and expelled for so doing. You are ready to say, "What! can this be so?" I answer, yes, it is so, and I will give you the *statute* law of the case. You will perceive that Methodism *now* has its *statute* and *common* law. By a statute law, made and enacted in 1796, it is declared "That no man, or number of men, shall on any account or occasion whatever call a meeting, write a letter, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, from one Conference till another!"

Here is law for you! But you will perhaps say, surely *this* law must be a dead letter on the statute book of Methodism. But I am sorry to say your supposition, though quite reasonable, and in perfect keeping with the times in which we live, is not the fact. Now for my proofs. Turn to the Minutes of this year, page 160, and you will find that this law is made the basis on which the *unity* and peace of the body depend.

Now suppose that unity did exist in the body, and that the unity *existing* were *universal*, (which you will perceive is all hypothetical,) yet I ask you what would such unity prove, but that the members of the Methodist society were prevented from thinking and expressing their thoughts, and consequently, that a unity founded on such law, was either a unity of ignorance, or coercion?

But thought—you cannot, may not, bind. It is free as the air we breathe. You may imprison the body; you may, by coercion, prevent the *utterance* of thought, but still will *mind* assert its freedom, and the barriers you place before it will ultimately give way; yes, and the very obstructions themselves will be hurried onward with the mighty torrent;—like the mountain flood, gathering strength as it rolls onward to the valley below, until finally it rolls its tributary waters to the river, and the river to the sea. Such is the progress of mind.

Taxes upon mind!—priestly injunctions and interdicts upon thought!—Conferential coercion laws, &c. &c. will all be carried onward with the mighty and increasing energies of thought, until the mind, free as God intended it to be,—religious liberty as universal as man himself, with all their glorious attendants, shall mix in the wide and unbounded ocean of TRUTH. Then you may see on the banks along the rivers' windings those little hindrances which man in his madness, and selfishness too, had erected as bulwarks to stop the progress of thought. You will pick up and admire the edicts of Popes, the presumptuous penal enactments of states, the Minutes of Conference, such as 1796 and 1835, for instance, and wonder how men, claiming the possession of reason or piety, could ever have supposed that thus, by such acts, they could have imprisoned thought, or shackled the free-born spirit of man. Oh, what a curiosity in the hands of some moral philosopher will not those far-famed bulls of Popery and Methodism be in some quickly approaching period of time! Reflecting on the folly and wickedness of man, I can easily suppose the sage to exclaim, weepingly,

"But man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,  
As make even angels weep."

I am aware that the preachers are endeavouring to make the people believe that an amelioration has been effected in the institutions of that body, and that more extensive *explanations*, &c. &c. will be afforded by a committee appointed for this purpose; I am therefore bound to notice those extensive booms which their high mightinesses have meted out to a kind and confiding people.

1st. On the subject of *memorial*. If you turn to the Minutes for this year,

(p. 167, 168,) you will there have the solemn, the disgusting, and I add, insulting revision of that part of the code of Methodism which relates to the right of the people to memorial Conference. But you will find that the fable of the mountain in labour was nothing to this; for after all the professions of liberality which were made during the sittings of, and since, Conference, the whole affair amounts to this,—insult heaped upon wrongs.

Now, this legislation upon the right of sending memorials, states, in the first place, the *time* when such memorials may be framed. On this it may be observed that no memorial can be framed till after the business of the June quarterly meeting is *finally* closed. Well, this a long time to be under the restrictions of absolute silence from Conference,—till after the June quarterly meeting; well, even then, the Conference has “cribbed, cabined, and confined” you; for you must only enjoy *THREE* days in the *entire* 365 in which you may legally express your opinion to the Conference. The meeting to memorialize must not take place before seven days from the termination of the June quarter day, nor later than ten days! *Three days!!* Why, here is a privilege for you, Wesleyans; there are three days on which, under such restrictions as I will expose to you, when you are supposed to enjoy the privilege of making your grievances known to your lords and masters! Well, but even in three days great things have been accomplished; a revolution in an ancient kingdom has been effected in three days, and why not in Methodism? Well aware of what might be accomplished in even three days, by free discussion, and very fearful of the results, yet, I venture to say that the *Ides* of March were not more fatal to Cæsar in Rome than would even the “*three*” days be to the despotism of Conference. But you will find that such are the restrictions, such the jealous guards set up by these despots, that through this channel there never will, there never can, a memorial go to Conference embracing an alteration that can at all impair the power of the preachers. As if even *THREE* days for free discussion in the entire year were most dangerous to the irresponsible power assumed and exercised by the Conference, the eyes of Argus are thrown around the proceedings of those *three* days; the approach to this privileged period, the constitution of the meeting itself, the business of the meeting, &c. &c. have all come under the lynx-eyed gaze of the guardians of the “keys,” that the very genius of liberty, in the most magical form you could imagine him to assume, will never, can never, find an entrance.

If the Conference had honestly said, our system is so perfect that it cannot be mended; our laws so equitable and just, that they cannot be improved; our own interests so secured that you cannot improve them, though you might alter them, and therefore we will allow no approach in the way of complaint; no possibility of *any* alteration but what may originate with ourselves;—then would they have deserved from the people credit for sincerity and plain dealing. But to have held out the hope, and the promise, and the declaration too, of having made a way by which the opinions of the people could be expressed in Conference, is to have imitated by their acts, I am sorry to say, the boasted successors of Peter, in almost all their councils. Just take a glance at the persons who are to compose a meeting for the purpose of memorializing Conference! Why, you might say, are not *all* the officers of society at least, if not *all* the members, permitted to assemble at least *three* days in the year to express an opinion on the institutions of Methodism? No; they are not. Local preachers and leaders may not take any part in such meetings, except they have been such for the last *TEN* years uninterruptedly and continuously. Here is a qualification for you, in order to methodistically send an opinion to Conference! How many excellent men, equally qualified with any other men in point of moral and mental properties, will be excluded by this law? Then, as for the rest of the persons legally qualified, they are principally nominees of the preachers: so that the Conference has not much to fear from the discussions of the *three* gracious days allowed (*nominally*) for the purpose of memorializing.

Notwithstanding all the caution, all the jealousy, all the superior tact, with which those *three* days are guarded, I am much mistaken if, after all, there be not something fatal in them to “Methodism as it is.” Will not many thousands of the Wesleyan community, after they shall have read this famous piece of Jesuitism throw the Minutes from them, and exclaim—

“Fie on’t, fie on’t,

’Tis an unweeded garden,—

Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely.”

They cannot, they will not, submit to such a solemn mockery of fair and honest legislation; they will demand the liberty of free-born men;—yes! and get it, too.

They may not get it willingly—but get it they will in the end. In the struggle let extremes be guarded against; whilst the people's rights are asserted, let the minister's rights be guarded; and, if so, I have no doubt at all of the result of the present movement.

Thanking you for your most respectful attention to my statements, I shall now withdraw, having occupied your time and attention so long.

[Long and loud demonstrations of approbation were given during the delivery of this lecture, and likewise at its conclusion.]

After Mr. Lamb had concluded, a member of the Bolton Society stood up, and made such a disclosure of the tactics and movements of the guardians of "Methodism as it is," in Bolton, as told most convincingly on the audience. Why don't they try and expel this "vile brother?" Perhaps they will be courteous enough to answer us.

## EXTRACORDINARY PROCEEDINGS AT WHITEHAVEN.

### EXPULSION OF SEVEN, AND RESIGNATION OF THIRTEEN, LOCAL PREACHERS, LEADERS, AND TRUSTEES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—You would learn from the *Christian Advocate*, some weeks ago, that thirteen official persons received notice of, and had, a mock trial, at a leaders' meeting, held in the vestry of the chapel. They were charged with "being members of the Grand Central Association," with "aiding and abetting the same," and with "opposing the discipline of the body with which they were connected;" but as the preacher (Mr. A. Watmough) was accuser and judge, and no witness brought forward to prove the guilt, nor the law laid down which the accused had broken, they unanimously refused to plead, and the preacher, therefore, considered that judgment went by default. After a lapse of twelve days, Messrs. Gordon, Douglas, Baisbrown, Casson, Fisher, Hodgson, and Sherwen, were waited upon by Mr. A. Watmough, and where the parties were not seen, the substance of the following was communicated in writing:—"I have called to perform another unpleasant part of my duty; it is to state that we have no further occasion for your services, as a local preacher or class leader in our Connexion." The meeting of leaders, on the Monday evening following, was numerous; in addition to whom all the local preachers resident in Whitehaven attended, with the exception of two, when two protests were got up and signed, to be presented severally at the local preachers' and quarterly meeting, which were to be held next day, stating that the persons signing looked upon themselves, in every respect, in the same situation as their expelled brethren. The protests were signed by every official person in Whitehaven excepting five. The following is an answer to the one presented at the local preachers' meeting:—

"To Messrs. Looney, Magee, Carmichael, Huddart, Swan, Alcock, Williamson, and Sibson.

"Brethren,—We are extremely sorry to receive from you a letter, in which you decline continuing in fellowship and union with us, as local preachers or Wesleyan Methodists. While we express our regret for your resignation, we must protest against the manner in which you have spoken of the proceedings of the superintendent in the suspension of those to whom you refer; nor do we think the proceedings are, in your own words, 'unreasonable, unmethodistical, or unscriptural.' Hoping, while you cannot consistently at present continue with us, you will, at no distant date, be able to resume your station among us.

"We are, your friends, with every feeling of respect and affection for your welfare.

(Signed by nine local preachers.)

"*Workington, Sept. 29, Local Preachers' Meeting.*"

The resignation of the leaders was read from the pulpit after the Sabbath forenoon service, and the people invited to attach themselves to other leaders;\* but

\* Messrs. R. Wilson, B. Briscoe, J. Torrentine, W. Bell, T. Lewin, T. Kinread, D. Magee, T. Carmichael, W. Huddart, J. Sibson, T. Alcock, J. Quirk, trustees and leaders, have resigned. Our society is nearly broken up; all the people, or nearly so, remaining with the leaders. As the people will not hear the preacher, and as we cannot expel him from the chapel, we are about taking another place of worship. We have fifteen preachers, resident in Whitehaven, on our plan, and many of our brethren, whose names are still on the other plan, and who reside in the circuit, are quite dissatisfied, so that against another quarter we expect an accession of persons and places.

hitherto all their solicitude has been in vain, and a great portion of the members attached to the Conference leaders have left, and joined the reformers. As our expulsion took place on the Saturday, and a love feast was appointed to be held the next day, Mr. Watmough designed to deprive us of it, and our second preacher (J. W. Barret) announced, after his sermon, that for some reason, which he was not prepared to state, the love feast appointed on the plan to be held that afternoon would be postponed to a future period; but our senior trustee and chapel steward stated "that as the preparation was made, and many country friends had arrived, they must not be disappointed, and it would, at all events, commence at the appointed time," when our society stewards (both expelled men) took their station at the door; the attendance was more numerous than ever I recollect seeing at a similar ordinance in that place, and the influence of the spirit of God more powerfully felt (according to the testimony of all with whom I have conversed) than ever it was before, with an expelled local brother in the pulpit. We continue to keep our stations at the leaders' meeting in the chapel vestry, the consequence is, that our opponents have withdrawn to another place; in times of preaching the congregation has nearly deserted the chapel, but repair back again from the various places where they have been worshipping against the prayer meeting. On the evening of the 4th instant, Mr. A. Watmough stated that he would meet as many of the members as had been attached to the resigned leaders as would meet him, therefore there would be no prayer meeting; but one of the brethren begun as usual, and was followed by the rest, and Mr. Watmough, instead of meeting his friends in the vestry (for indeed he had none to meet) kept pacing up and down the aisle, whilst they were praying, taking notice of the different persons present, and from a long list of names taken down by him or some of his friends, he selected seven, and applied to the magistrate's clerk for summonses to bring them up before the bench for interrupting him in his duty. This list I myself read in Mr. Heywood's office, and although he and his friends vauntingly state that it was through compassion to the individuals he did not press the charge, I solemnly aver that he was told there was no ground for conviction, the benediction being pronounced, and the people moving out of the chapel before the prayer meeting commenced; yea, further, I can prove that it was stated, on good authority, that if he brought forward the question he would most likely be turned out of court. The seven individuals selected were those who exercised publicly in prayer. All that grieves us is, that the matter was not publicly investigated; but Mr. Watmough was advised to withdraw it. And now comes the last and most romantic scene which has been witnessed since the arrival of the redoubtable Abraham Watmough of expulsion notoriety, who states that the keys of the Kingdom are given unto him by our Blessed Lord in the very same sense that they were given unto Peter,—that "Whatsoever he shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and, whatsoever he shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," &c. There is a meeting of the collectors and visitors of the Samaritan Society held in the chapel vestry every Wednesday evening after prayer-meeting, for the transaction of business solely connected with the sick poor. It happens that this society is solely managed by the reformers. Mr. Watmough being bent on disturbing them, came up just before the conclusion of the prayer-meeting, and took his stand at the vestry-door, when one of the female visitors of the society, who was in the meeting, suspecting that all was not right, watched her opportunity to slip into the vestry and sit down quietly in the dark; as soon as the prayer meeting was concluded, Mr. Watmough took command of the door of the vestry apparently determined to prevent the entrance of any individual by force, and refused admittance to all that came, stating that he must have that place for religious purposes. In vain did the friends urge the goodness of their cause, when the sister inside cried out, "I am here, and I have got the book." To whom a brother replied, "If you be there open the window," (a large wooden window, about two feet by three wide, for the purpose of seeing and hearing into the vestry, when the chapel might be filled,) which was immediately complied with, and all the visitors, male and female, like doves—but some of them very large ones—went in at the window, commenced with singing and prayer, considered the cases of the afflicted, concluded as they began, came out as they went in, namely, through the window,—Mr. A. Watmough standing guard at the door until they had made their exit, whilst the boys were jeering him for his folly, and others reprimanding him for his indecency in permitting females to be so exposed.—Yours, &c.

Whitehaven, October 14, 1835.

A REFORMER.



## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Guernsey, October, 1835.*—Previously to the establishment of the *Christian Advocate* our people were in absolute ignorance of the actual workings of the system; and hence, excepting occasional instances of misrule, the preachers have been regarded as paragons of all that is wise and good. Well do I remember that, a little after the Leeds transaction, having our preacher to dine, he gave, in reply to our inquiries, an account of the case quite at variance with what I afterwards ascertained to be the truth. Ever since their unmanly treatment of Mr. J. R. Stephens, I have been decided in opinion that the preachers, in their Confidential character, ought to be checked in their priestly domination; and this opinion every week's report has served to confirm. In this feeling many here have participated, but with us, generally speaking, the reform movement is still an under-current; this is owing to our preachers having had policy enough to take no notice, publicly at least, of the present state of things, and to the influence which a general attachment to them exerts among such as, without examining for themselves, are prepared to swallow as gospel all a preacher may say. I have been honoured with a good share of odium for writing in the *Advocate*, having had independence enough to make no secret of it. With our late preacher, I have had a few rubs; Mr. Bustard, our new one, has hitherto been quite silent on Conference and reform proceedings. One of the stewards, who, from his intelligence, possesses great influence, is a determined enemy to Methodism as it is. He told me the other day that the approaching quarterly meeting is not likely to pass without obtaining the sense of the meeting on those *insane* regulations of the late Conference. I have good reason to assure you that they will not submit to such a violation of their constitutional rights; a majority, at least, will protest against laws abounding in jesuitry, arrogance, and injustice, unless, indeed, they allow themselves to be gulled! Surely the preachers ought to take alarm. The consequences of their temerity will soon manifest themselves. They have been furnishing weapons by means of which the triumph of truth and liberty will be the sooner achieved. Only let the people be properly enlightened, and your warfare is ended. May the Divine blessing succeed your persevering efforts!

In reference to the other circuits in this district, I shall just observe that the handful of people of Alderney and

Sark may be ranked with the inhabitants of the moon! Of Jersey, I am sorry to say that "gross darkness prevails." The great majority of the societies in this district is composed of the country people, who, from their little or non-acquaintance with the English language, are effectually precluded from the usual sources of acquiring Methodistical knowledge. Hence the fact, that, but for their having travelling preachers, they would regard themselves as totally unconnected with the Conference! They contribute scarcely any thing to its funds, and their preachers do not concern themselves much about its proceedings.—*From a Correspondent.*

*Sheerness, October 5.*—Mr. Josh. Marsden has endeavoured to perplex and annoy us in every possible way. Yesterday he expelled, by *letter*, one of our most talented local preachers, who is also a leader, and resides in the borough of Queenborough. He has been the managing man at that place for about 15 years; all the society there, about twenty members, will go with him. He is expelled without any trial, for being a member of an *illegal faction!* The superintendent has been a long time fulminating at others, but seems afraid of coming to the point. Last quarter he withheld the tickets from a whole class. Five of our trustees have addressed the President of Conference, disapproving of the discipline as now administered, and begging to be informed, if they peaceably retire, what Conference proposes to do to indemnify them for the bills of acceptances to which their names are affixed. His reply states that he has directed the superintendent to acquaint them what provision is made in the trust deed. The result will probably be their inability to find five men out of 300 members willing to take the responsibilities. So much for Methodism as it is! The cause of reform is rapidly increasing at Maidstone. A visit from Dr. Warren would be highly beneficial in the South. If he come, he will raise all this part of Kent, especially the Rochester circuit. By next Conference I trust wonders will be effected. I shall not be satisfied until I obtain a correspondent in every circuit in the county.—*From a correspondent.*

*Nantwich.*—The cause of the Wesleyan Association daily gains ground in this circuit. There are forty local preachers on the plan.

*Derby.*—We understand that a public meeting of the friends of the Association is about to be held here in the Indepen-

dent chapel. Dr. Warren will find many hearty friends to Methodist reform.

*Preston.*—It is in contemplation to hold a public meeting here very soon, and no doubt it will be numerously attended by the Wesleyan reformers, and friends of religious liberty.

*Sandbach.*—We are doing well here. The place in which we worship is crowded to excess, and all our meetings are crowned with a gracious influence. I have no doubt but success of the best kind will attend us.—*From a correspondent.*

*Liverpool.*—The Wesleyan Association have resolved to celebrate their anniversary on Monday, the 9th of November, on which occasion there will be a tea party at the Music-hall. A Tabernacle is about to be built in the north end of the town, and shortly afterwards one in the South Circuit.

*London.*—A public meeting of Wesleyan reformers was held in Vincent-square, Westminster, on the 14th inst. Mr. Eckett in the chair; and on Monday last another very numerous and respectable meeting took place in Finsbury-square. Particulars have not yet reached us.

*Blackburn.*—A public meeting will be held here, this day, (21st Oct.) for the purpose of explaining the subjects which now unhappily agitate the Wesleyan Connexion, and the principles of Wesleyan reformers will be fully stated. Dr. Warren, and Messrs. Hughes, Lees, and Taylor, of Manchester, Mr. Livesey, of Bury, and a deputation from Liverpool are expected to take part in the proceedings.

*Prescot.*—The account which appeared in the *Lantern*, 23d September, respecting the opening of a place of worship at Prescot was substantially correct; and really it was not very civil in the

*Illuminator* to contradict us so uncere-  
moniously. Does the editor forget how pertinaciously he denied that Dr. Clarke, speaking of the Conference of 1828, said,—“They have been for many days doing the Devil’s business, and they have done it just as the Devil would have it done?” And yet the truth of our statement was publicly confirmed by Mr. Hickling, jun., of Birmingham, who stated at the Delegate meeting in Sheffield, that the Doctor had related the circumstance again and again in his hearing, and it was quite a current matter through the whole town. Then, again, as to Mr. Watson’s “Affectionate Address,” Dr. Clarke observed, “that the persons who had answered Mr. Watson had fairly thrown him on his back, and that he could not get up again.” The editor of the *Illuminator* denies facts for no better reason than because he dislikes them. It is a bad habit, and we advise him to “reform it altogether.”

*Manchester.*—Dr. Warren in his speech at Rochdale alluded to the three or four Tabernacles about to be built here. The friends and members of the Association purchased ground in Grosvenor-street, a few days since, on which the building of a chapel will be immediately commenced, and completed, it is expected, in February next; to be held in 1000 shares at one pound per share, payable by four monthly instalments. No person to have a vote unless he holds five shares, and no one to have more than three votes whatever number of shares he may hold. At the Quarterly meeting, held on Wednesday last, it was ascertained that the number of members of society in connexion with the Association is 2700; some classes about to join will make the number about 3000.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We confess our inability to answer the following question put to us by T. S.—“Can you inform me how long the poor are to be permitted to enjoy the benefit of the one thousand free sittings appropriated for their use in the new chapel, Leeds, as stated at the foot of the enormous placard announcing the opening? On the outside of the Roman Catholic chapel, in Texteth-park, it is written, ‘the whole of the ground floor to remain free for ever.’ Here pride and avarice can make no encroachments on the precincts of the poor and needy! Now I think it would be as well to have a clause inserted in the deeds of Methodist chapels to the same effect. Let any one cast his eyes round the chapels in this town, and he will see what shameful encroachments have been made by illiberal and narrow-minded trustees. Although a very small portion of Brunswick Chapel was given for the use of the poor, yet within the last two years sixty-seven sittings have been taken from them; nay, up to the last four or five weeks trespassers have been nibbling, and who can tell when they will cease to nibble. When a chapel is erected, and the seats are unappropriated, the proprietors have a right in the first instance to dispose of them as they please, but when once freely, formally, and solemnly set apart for the accommodation of the poor of the church, they ought not afterwards to be capriciously removed, under any pretence whatever, without a just equivalent, by the trustees, but sacredly preserved for the charitable purpose originally intended by the donors. ‘Remove not the land-marks which thy fathers have set.’ The poor are our brethren, Mr. Editor, and upon my word, Sir, it is high time to cry—‘Stop thief!’—Perhaps—

our correspondent could explain for what purpose the trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist chapels in Liverpool are in immediate want of the loan of £5000. The subject has excited a sensation of alarm. Can *T. S.* throw some light on the nature and cause of the pressing demands recently made for so large a sum? Our anxiety is not at all allayed by the following extract of a letter from Mr. Thomas Cooper to the Rev. William Smith, dated Lincoln, Sept. 1, 1835. "A sense of duty urges me to stop the press in order to warn my fellow-citizens how they take upon them the responsibility of becoming trustees of your new chapel. Whether you will state the wily dangerousness of being entrapped to sign a *Chapel-deed on the Conference plan*, I know not.—But I here tell the public that a friend and old acquaintance of mine who by a written bond had become answerable for a sum borrowed by the Wesleyan society at Gainsborough, WAS, ON THAT ACCOUNT, LAST WEEK ARRESTED. Alas, for trustees! Will they never learn wisdom?

*Tenax* is inadmissible. We decline giving publicity to assertions, the truth of which we have no means of ascertaining on anonymous authority; besides, we think it very improper in any one to interfere with his neighbour in regard to the amount of his subscription towards charitable institutions.

*Philo-pacificus* had better send his clumsy defence of the Theological Institution, occupying twenty-three pages closely written, to the *Watchman*, for which veracious journal it is much more suitable than for the pages of the *Lantern*. The Conference party, in coarse, unmeaning Billingsgate language, have long arrogated to themselves all *respectability*.—*Philo* goes a step further, and claims for them all the *piety* of the Connexion! Let him not "mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow;" and let him, if he can, prove that the following extract from the speech delivered by the Rev. John Hannah, the principal Theological Tutor, at the Missionary Anniversary Meeting, held in Pitt-street Chapel, April 1833, exhibits principles of genuine piety rather than an anxious desire to obtain money. "How that individual," says the *Circular*, "who is usually so serious and solemn, could so far forget himself as to relate an anecdote respecting prayer, calculated to turn the exercise of it into ridicule and contempt, is, to us, unaccountable, except upon the fact we have assumed, namely, that there is a lamentable falling off in the tone and spirit of these meetings:—A certain preacher, said Mr. Hannah, who was on a begging excursion in behalf of a distressed chapel, waited upon a wealthy individual for the purpose of soliciting his aid, but could make no impression upon him by his statements of the embarrassed condition of the chapel, or by the exhibition of his plan of relief; he was deaf to all his urgent pleas and entreaties, and would not listen to the voice of the charmer. Finding that he was not at all likely to succeed in that way, the preacher proposed that they should go to prayer, to which, of course, the individual in question could have no objection. The preacher prayed, and as he prayed the man's heart began to soften; the preacher became more fervent, and the individual's feelings were more excited, and he was heard, by the preacher, to sigh, and with the sigh escaped the ejaculation, 'I'll give him a sovereign!' Encouraged by this, the preacher prayed on, and with increased fervour, until the man, heaving a deeper sigh, exclaimed 'I'll give him two sovereigns.' Hearing which, the preacher became still bolder, and thought he could not do better than proceed in prayer, which he did with greater intensity of zeal, and so powerfully wrought upon the rich man, that fetching an astonishing sigh,—whether it came all the way from his big toe or not, he (Mr. Hannah) could not tell, but certainly it was a very heavy sigh,—and coupled with the exclamation 'I'll give him five!' The preacher then thought he had better conclude—strike while the iron was hot, and obtain the immediate fulfilment of the man's promise. This was related as an instance of the power of prayer!"

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John Wesley was the founder of this sect, every where spoken against. Both by his preaching and by his living he showed himself the witness of the truth and power of that inspiration, which enables the man of God to know nothing amongst men but Jesus Christ and him crucified. No one could ever charge him with seeking his own. "It is you I seek and not yours," was the unchallenged and unchanging spirit, in which he lived, and worked, and died. All that he did is before the world. He knew nothing of men's opinions and persuasions, as such. Men of all sentiments, religious and political, were his brethren and allies, if, with him, they strove to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on endless life; to save their own souls, whilst they were instrumental in assisting others also to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. This was the great, the only bond of his confederated or "United Societies," whom he supplied with every means of grace required by the coming emergencies of their novel situation, and evidently furnished out of the providential storehouse of the great Head of the Church. Himself a Churchman (as to its doctrines and discipline generally) *he applied himself to the reformation of mankind*, according to the light and help which God himself was pleased to afford; determined, in the meantime, to know no man after the flesh, but thankfully to avail himself of the aid of all, and never to rest until the heavenly character of the church of Christ should be seen and acknowledged, and every thing worldly and unholy be taken for ever out of its way. In one short sentence he has left upon record the full and settled judgment of his enlightened mind upon this fundamental subject, on which also he uniformly acted throughout the whole course of his truly apostolical career; and, instead of crowding to

gether a variety of quotations, all of them to the same point, we shall rehearse these memorable words, written as if for these very times; spoken as if by a spirit of prophecy, to mark out the doom and betoken the speedy downfall of the USURPATION that has subsequently been built upon the scriptural foundation which he was chosen of God to lay in this benighted land. "THE BEAST IS A SPIRITUALLY SECULAR POWER, OPPOSITE TO THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST; A POWER NOT MERELY SPIRITUAL OR ECCLESIASTICAL, NOR MERELY SECULAR AND POLITICAL, BUT A MIXTURE OF BOTH." These oracular words of his we leave to the thoughtful meditation of the true Christian. They will bear a second and a third perusal. We pray God to carry them forward to his inmost heart, there to become auxiliary to the establishment of the almost unknown, unheeded, but heaven-sprung truth of Jesus Christ,—*"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD."*

Since John Wesley's death his successors of the Conference have endeavoured to root themselves as "*a spiritually secular power*" in the land,—to rival, to out-strip, and then to cast under them all other modes or forms of faith whatever. They have, for near half a century, been underworking the rights and freedoms of mankind; the same outside show of doctrine and of discipline, which their Father left them, being uniformly presented to the beguiled and beblinded eye of their unsuspecting adherents. The last meshes of their net have lately been knotted, and upwards of one million of our fellow-countrymen, of their classes and congregations, in Great Britain alone, now find themselves inclosed within the toils of an ecclesiastical economy, which asserts the *divine right* of an irresponsible priesthood to legislate in all matters of doctrine, whilst it maintains the *legal right of ONE HUNDRED self-chosen elders of that priesthood to have and to hold, to open and to shut several thousand houses for worship, all raised by voluntary subscription for the religious instruction and benefit of the respective neighbourhoods in which they have been built.* Besides which appalling fact, it is openly, unblushingly asserted that, whilst this priesthood can deal as they list with the souls of men and the things pertaining to God, the members of their numerous societies and congregations have no right whatever, human or divine, so much as to deliberate, much less to decide upon, any of the great principles which associate them together as a religious or a corporate body. Certain opinions, held indiscriminately, amongst all classes of the community, civil and religious, have been declared irreconcilable with the connexional existence of the parties holding them; certain proceedings, sanctioned every where else in the churches of Christ, have been denounced as unmethodistical, and have entailed the summary excommunication of all who have hitherto dared to identify themselves therewith. Thus, within a few short months, (the machinations of these lords over God's heritage being completed,) several preachers, with thousands of the members of the body, have been solemnly expelled. These men are now unwillingly obliged to renounce all connexion with their brethren,—all claim and title to the temples they have assisted in rearing, in which themselves and their children, and their neighbours, have together worshipped the Lord God of their fathers. Since the infamous act of uniformity was proclaimed, the consequences of which are matters of notorious history, so frightful, so daring a stretch of priestly prerogative has never been exhibited in the United Kingdom. Of the real state of things in this body the country at large has but little knowledge; nor are our fellow-countrymen at all aware of the dangers with which they, in common with ourselves, are menaced by these overt acts of an ecclesiastical tyranny. The concentration, the organization, the secrecy, the ease with which, at the nod of one man, the most complicated, yet most efficient machinery in the world, is now brought to bear upon the people of England, as one means of checking the progress of salutary reforms; and, under the mask of religion at home, and missions abroad, of overtopping all other churches, and upon their ruins causing a second grisly Papacy to arise; these religious and political features of Wesleyan Methodism, as at present administered, are now disclosing themselves in a way that, unhappily, leaves no room for doubt, whilst it must fill the mind of the generous philanthropist with serious apprehension, if not with dismay.

To counteract this influence, and, if possible, to subvert this power; to find out what is the freedom wherewith Christ has made his people free; and then, having attained unto the truth of God, (whether Wesley, or Calvin, or Luther may have aided us in our search after it,) to hand down the clustering blessings that grow out of it to our children after us,—this great idea has led to the formation of the *Wesleyan Methodist Association*. Whether it shall succeed or not it is for God, for time, for the friends of truth every where, to determine. On this one thing the members of the Association have set their hearts, and they hereby

again pledge themselves never to grow weary so long as they have any hope from Heaven, any help from their brethren, whatever may be their creed, and whatever the name by which they are called.

The object of this address is to call the attention of Christians, and of the public generally, to the present position and aspects of the Wesleyan Conference on the one hand, and of its reformers on the other; to forewarn Englishmen of all classes of the danger that threatens their *municipal* and *national liberties*, through the wily but steadily progressing career of this now stupendous body, more secret, farther ramified, and more dangerous than any *Orange Union* that ever plotted against our freedom; to forearm all thus forewarned, that they may be ready to meet these men at every fresh development of their deep-laid schemes, and to bespeak the counsel and support of all who are willing to take any part in reforming this great people, and so, relatively, in reforming the entire church of Jesus Christ.

The friendly leaning of Wesleyanism towards the Church of England, so grandiloquently, but gratuitously, trumpeted forth by the Conference of 1834, and so covertly made to bear upon the politico-religious crisis of that period, together with some more recent attempts to conciliate the influential Dissenters whom they had previously most cavalierly affected to despise, has happily opened the eyes of both these great parties in the state to the jesuitical character of *modern Methodism*—running with the hare, but holding with the hound—standing aloof on the field of battle, and in treaty with each of the contending hosts, until the hour of hottest fight should afford an opportunity to pour down with its mercenary legions, and occasion their mutual discomfiture. This trickery with the one party, and treachery with the other, has disgusted them both. Whig and Tory—Churchman and Dissenter—Conservative and Reformer—Protestant and Papist, are all alike prepared for the tortuous, though undeviating policy of the best organized, and most dangerous hierarchy, at present to be found in Christendom. We seek not, as an Association, to mingle in this strife. We are men, Britons, and followers of Christ; as such, we would seek out the Truth, and, having found it, under whatever shape we care not, we are willing to walk after it, and to abide by it. Whoever is like minded with ourselves in this matter, or whoever should think we are in this followers of that which is good, he is the man to whom we look at the present crisis of our ecclesiastical and national existence, for the kindly help he sees we need; whilst, at the same time, we trust we shall not be backward in doing all that may be in our power to assist him in the furtherance of every thing that shall be shown to be truly wise and good, and strong and holy. Sure we are, that the times we live in are not times either for sleep or for sloth. The minds of men every where are athirst, we might almost say agasp for some better thing than that they have hitherto been furnished with. We are weary—we are woe, when we look at the tearing, the biting, the hating, the worrying of one another, that has been, and still is, too visible in some of the sections of the professing Church of Christ. *Men and brethren, help,—come up with us to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.*

We call, then, most earnestly upon the free press, metropolitan and provincial, to afford their powerful assistance in disabusing the mind of the public, who know little or nothing comparatively of the real state of this hierarchy; we invite the notice of all parties of politicians to the existence of a priestly power, that is ready for the time and to the seeming, to coalesce with any, whilst it is silently working its way over them all, and above them all, and to the destruction of them all. We solicit the assistance, pecuniary and every other, of the friends of truth and liberty—the wise—the great—the good of all parties, who are bound to none, but God only, to enable us to carry, to successful termination, a work which we have undertaken, not with any private aim, but for the public good; and in which we are resolved never to slacken, whatever the sacrifice we may be called upon personally to make, until having brought the subject before the whole British public in its courts of law and of equity, and of supreme legislation, and, lastly, before its most awful and all-determining tribunal—the tribunal of *public opinion*—it be seen *what the truth is, and whether that truth shall stand or fall.*

\* \* \* In every principal town a committee of the *Wesleyan Methodist Association* is to be found, to whom Donations and Subscriptions can be transmitted; thence to be conveyed to the Manchester and Liverpool Central Committee; or to any of the following gentlemen:—W. SMITH, Esq. Reddish House, near Stockport; Mr. W. WOOD, Newton-street, Manchester; Mr. RICHARD FARRER, Liverpool; or to JOHN THURSTON, Esq., Catherine-street, Strand, London.—*Liverpool, Oct. 17, 1835.*



# ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE.

## LETTER V.

"Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage."—ST. PAUL.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—My last letter closed with an intimation that I should probably claim a little further indulgence in the occupation of your columns, with a view to the exposure and refutation of some of the wretchedly futile, though deeply sophistical, attempts that have been made by the crafty, but *completely defeated*, advocates of corruption and despotism, in the periodicals desecrated by the iniquitous cause, which, black as the Ethiopian's skin, and spotted as the leopard's hide, they have vainly endeavoured to blanch over with an ablution of asserted innocence, and to conceal under the borrowed ermine of the pastoral robe. It is not the first time, Sir, that men of treacherous hearts and noxious dispositions have found it necessary to mask their true characters under such disguises that even a wolf may be mistaken for a lamb, or a serpent for a dove; for Satan himself, the grand "master" of those convenient "ceremonies," sets them the example, by "transforming himself into an angel of light;" until, touched with "Ithuriel's spear," the detected fiend starts up in his proper shape and colour, to the no small astonishment and dismay of his deluded dupes. Pointed as these remarks may be, they are not only elicited, but fully justified, by the circumstances of the case at issue, as already developed in my former letters, and more especially so by the tone and language of the last two numbers of that glimmering glow-worm which has just light enough in its tail to make *the darkness of its illumination* visible to the whole Christian world.\* The deceptive sophistry and malignant falsehoods deliberately broached and promulgated in the leading but anonymous articles of those two firebrands of fiction, stamp the character of their *reverend* author, if such he be, with indelible disgrace, as a writer in such a cause, where truth and justice, equity and piety, conciliatory concession and cordial benevolence, should be the indices of the sacred character, he has thus desecrated by its devotion to so unhallowed a purpose. What, Sir, is this man so stupidly ignorant as not to know, in his conscience, that the sole objects of the "Association," and of its forced and reluctant efforts, are the restoration and establishment of peace, prosperity, and permanent tranquillity in the Connexion, upon the sound, the solid, the immutable basis of "righteousness and true holiness" in the administration of its spiritual government, and in every branch of its salutary discipline and political economy? If he does not know this, his ignorance should have taught him to observe the *silence* for which alone it could qualify him; but if he does know it—and *know it he must, and does right well*,—what excuse can be offered in palliation of the consummate hypocrisy and the unqualified impudence which are the true characteristics of his impertinent vituperations? I know of none.

Let us take a sample or two of this precious *morceau* of jesuitical craft and malevolent misrepresentation, as a fair specimen of the "leaven which leavens the whole lump." The misnamed *Illuminator*, No. 17, commences with the article of "AGITATION;" on which, after remarking that "the *wreck* of the 'Grand Central' had agreed to "continue their vocation of agitation for another twelve months," goes on to say,—“We believe that most of the rotten branches are already shaken from the Methodistic tree.” Now, Sir, this "*wreck*" is a noble, a stately, and a powerful vessel, built, indeed, for the peaceable establishment of a "free trade with the celestial empire," and at this moment richly freighted with a precious cargo of immortal souls, and on a prosperous voyage to her destined port, urged on by the fair breezes of prayer and praise, as she triumphantly skims the ocean of love: yet is she "armed at all points" with triple tiers of such tremendous artillery that the very sound of her guns has already shaken the bulwarks of that citadel of corruption, *the Conference conclave*, to its foundations; giving glorious presage that at the next broadside the walls of this spiritual Jericho will fall flat beneath the echo of these pretty little "rams' horns;" while the "silver trumpets" of salvation are proclaiming THE JUBILEE OF REFORMED METHODISM, "from Dan to Beersheba," over the happy land. The "report"

\* Numbers 17 and 18 of what, by a strange perversion of language, is styled "THE ILLUMINATOR;" just as "the HOLY INQUISITION" was called "The House of Mercy!"

of these guns has started a solitary pigmy sentinel of the garrison out of his sleep, and, if we may judge from the terror depicted in his countenance, and the incoherency of his ejaculations, almost driven him out of his senses also: the first exclamation of his terrified imagination being, as above stated, "that most of the rotten branches are already shaken from the Methodistic tree!" Now, Sir, although it is an indubitable fact that, in spite of the obstinate resistance of the preachers, some execution in this way has been done, yet it is not true that "*most of the rotten branches*" have been lopped away; and hence the absolute necessity, and the unquestionable wisdom, of continuing the salutary process of "agitation for another twelve months." It is, indeed, happily true that deception has been detected and severely scourged; fraudulent concealment has been discovered and justly exposed and punished; and tyrannical oppression has been paralyzed and disarmed, while the sneaking and fraudulent treachery which suppressed the conciliatory enactments of 1795 and 1797 has been compelled, with indelible disgrace for the perpetrated fraud, to restore the secreted property: yet the main trunk of "spiritual despotism" still remains in comparative vigour, as the basis of the tree; and it is in defence of this obstinate, though decidedly "rotten" pillar, that we hear the shrill voice of the little terrified sentinel in question, and perceive the very hairs of his head erected, as if in confirmation of the terror of his mind!\* In the delirium of his surprise he cries out, "But the want of success will deduct nothing from the *malevolence* of the design, and the *antichristian* character of the intended crusade against the peace and prosperity of the societies." A specimen of captious rhodomontade this, which, being interpreted by truth, means, that "the temporary want of complete success in the noble efforts of the Association can deduct nothing from the wisdom and benevolence of the truly Christianlike design of their intended crusade against that tyrannical and cruel oppression which is destroying the peace and prosperity of the societies." The wicked perversion of this plain, manifest, and incontrovertible truth, by the *reverend* calumniator, demonstrates either that his understanding is bewildered, his mind the dupe of its own deception, or else that his "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Let his own conscience decide which of these is the real state of the case.

In the same antichristian spirit of invective and wilful misrepresentation he goes on to say, that the delegates of the Association have "published their purpose to carry *firebrands, arrows, and death* into every part of the Connexion to which they can have access, for *one year* more:" which malignant vituperation, being translated by common sense into truth, means, that "before the Association abandons the Connexion, as an incurable sink of corruption, under the present mal-administration of its government, that the Association will, notwithstanding the inflexible and graceless obstinacy of the preachers, and their slanderous aspersions of its excellent motives, generously persevere, for another year, in its most laudable, pious, laborious, and benevolent efforts to redeem that character to the Connexion which the ambitious folly of the Conference has so recklessly sacrificed to the idol of its usurped power." This is the true version of the libel in question.

As another specimen of the pitiful sophistry by which the preceding tissue of slander and falsehood is attempted to be supported, I adduce the following sample:—"If their occupation be good and Christian, why limit it to one year only? If wicked and sinful, on what pretended right do they claim for themselves the privilege of omitting the peaceful and pious duties of the Christian life, and giving themselves to '*work wickedness*' for that length of time?" In reply to the first of these impertinent, captious, and deceptive interrogations, I say, the "occupation is good and Christianlike;" but human patience, any more than the Divine forbearance, is not, nor ought it in such a case to be, inexhaustible; for if even God hath said that his "spirit shall not always strive" with the obstinacy of rebellious man, assuredly the benevolent efforts of even "The Central Association" for the redemption of Methodism from the paralyzing blasts of Conference despotism, must find their proper limits in the *incorrigible obstinacy* of the preachers. But mark the malignant atrocity of the base and slanderous insinuations of the second interrogation. Let this worthy coadjutant of his real employer, the grand "accuser of the brethren, who accuses them night and day before God," only attend one of the fellowship meetings, or worshipping assemblies, of the Association, either in Liverpool or Manchester, and there witness

\* Current conjecture identifies this personage with a certain little preacher, whose station is not 100 miles from the Liverpool South Circuit. Can this surmise be true? I should hope not!

the sacred and hallowing influence of the grace and spirit of God resting upon and animating the assembly, and then let him ask even his own *seared* conscience if it be possible that men pleading for such a cause, with a mass of evidence and a force of argument which bid defiance to Conference chicanery to disprove or overthrow, can have thus renounced the Christian character, and *gratuitously* abandoned themselves to "work wickedness" with insatiable greediness? But if this man's conscience should be even sealed against the conviction of truth, still, even the degree of understanding he evinces in the craft of his sophistry, must prove to him both the fallacy and the malignity of this base and groundless accusation, as it most amply betrays the character of the weapons to which the cause he has thus attempted to support is driven for its defence. And hence, Sir, we perceive the total failure of the premature conclusion which this anonymous slanderer has drawn from his false premises, namely, "*This limitation of agitation to a year is an admission of the evil of the thing, which we gladly take.*" Softly, Mr. Blunderer; here is no admission whatever in your favour, but, whether you have the sense to see it or not, a most decisive evidence against you. The object of the "agitation" proves its character to be good, while the truly Christian spirit and patience of its conductors identify them with the Luthers and the Melancthons of former ages.

Nothing discouraged, however, he goes on to say,—“They will tell us, it is hoped, that in the prescribed period a sufficient impression will be made on the body to lead to an admission of their claims. They have no such expectation: they have no such hope.” I readily grant that they have no grounds for the indulgence of any such hope, nor is it at all probable that it is either indulged, or its realization at all calculated upon. The inveterate character of the proceedings of the Conference in the case, as far as it has gone, is amply sufficient to extinguish every spark of such a hope in every rational mind. I certainly am compelled to admit that the corruption of the Methodist Conference has shown itself to be proof against all human efforts to redeem its lost character; but what then? Are the people, therefore, to be the eternal slaves of its despotic tyranny; and the everlasting dupes of its deception, and victims of its oppression? Must no further efforts be made to emancipate them from their degrading bondage, and invest them with that “liberty wherewith Christ makes all his people free?” Must the legitimate and indefeasible claims of British Christians, in the nineteenth century, thus be crushed in their dawn, strangled in their birth, and consigned to everlasting oblivion, because their priesthood is following the example of the papacy? Heaven forbid! But what says our author?—“The end they propose is to loosen the attachment of as many from the Connexion, and make as great a sweep from it as possible; and they sagaciously conclude that this end can be best secured by agitation, which is no other than raising suspicion and discontent by the spread of falsehood, the poisoned barb of slander, and an appeal to the passions of the people.”

Sir, I am not, as you well know, a member of the “Association,” and consequently I can have no pretensions to any knowledge of what the ultimate objects of their hopes or expectations, or even of their present intentions, may be; but from the most impartial view I can take of their cause, and their mode of conducting it, I am most perfectly satisfied on the following points, namely,—1, Of the sacred justice of that cause: 2, Of the absolute necessity of carrying out their spirited exertions to their proper and final issue: 3, Of the unmixed purity of their motives: 4, Of the *unimpeachable truth* of all their published statements: and, 5, That the hand of God is in the whole transaction; and, consequently, if it be continued under the influence of his holy Spirit, and the direction of his gracious providence, and conducted in conformity with his declared will, it must, and infallibly will, issue in the promotion of his glory, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom amongst mankind, whether Methodism be purified by its efforts or not. And should these glorious objects be attained, the mortification of Conference pride, the exposure of its tyranny, and the abridgment of its usurped authority, will excite little sympathy in the religious world. As for the charge of “the spread of falsehood,—the poisoned barb of slander,” I solemnly declare that I have neither seen, heard, nor read, in any or all of the publications or verbal statements of the Association, or of their agents, a single iota of evidence—(and I have closely and critically examined them)—in the slightest degree to justify such a malicious accusation: and I think I may safely challenge the *reverend* calumniator himself, if such he is, to produce a particle of such evidence in support of his unwarranted accusation. But truth obliges me to say that I have

unhappily seen a superabundance of such articles in the organs of Conference abusive misrepresentation.

For my own part, Sir, were my opinion or advice asked upon the whole case, I should decidedly say to the Association,—Fearlessly follow your celestial Guide. He is showing you the fallacy of all dependance on human aid to support a sinking branch of his church. Many of the timbers of your “old ship” are completely “rotten;” nor will either the captain or his crew suffer you to repair them; neither will they do it themselves. But, my brethren, there is an “ARK OF SALVATION” within your reach, in which every plank is not only sound, but incorruptible also. It is under the command of “the Prince of Peace,” who has laid in an ample stock of the best provisions for a voyage to “Canaan’s happy shore,” across the pacific ocean of “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Her Captain has the command of both the winds and the waves, and he has also an unerring chart of the voyage and compass of direction, so that it is impossible this noble vessel can ever suffer shipwreck. When dear bought experience shall have proved to you the impossibility of stopping the innumerable leaks of the old crazy fabric you are now in vain striving to patch up, you will, perhaps, be better inclined than at present to accept of that happiness, peace, and impregnable security which you may in vain seek for in any human institution. Rest assured, my worthy and respected friends, that the SON and SPIRIT of your GOD are the only safe guides, and his holy word the only unerring directory to “glory, honour, and” a happy “immortality.” Nor will you ever find permanent peace upon earth, until, soaring above the feeble and fluctuating influence of human authority, you nobly declare your independence, assert and maintain your inalienable rights, and become, “in spirit and in truth,” *genuine* “BIBLE CHRISTIANS.”

My next letter shall be devoted to an examination of the remainder of the chagrined and factious effusion of slanderous malevolence and mortified pride, which has elicited the preceding observations; till when,—I remain, yours, &c.

Liverpool, Oct. 12, 1835.

THEOPHILUS.

## SOPHISTRY AND MISREPRESENTATION OF THE ILLUMINATOR EXPOSED.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN’S LANTERN.

SIR,—In the *Illuminator* of the 23d ult. appears an article on Agitation, which inevitably exposes its author to the charge of misrepresentation and sophistry. It was doubtless intended to be an unanswerable apology for Methodism as it is; but will any person who is neither bigotted nor incapable so consider it? Before we proceed to the consideration of those matters which especially require our notice, I would ask, is it not to be lamented that he who so strongly recommends us to cultivate the spirit and imitate the example, as a controversialist, of the late Rev. J. Fletcher, should himself so greatly offend against decency as to be guilty of those personal reflections upon the character of his opponents, which, I can assure him, neither support his arguments nor bring credit to his cause?

The first particulars demanding our attention are his observations on the resolution of the delegates at Sheffield, to continue their efforts, during another year, so to inform the public mind as to set the subjects in dispute fairly before them. He asks,—“If their occupation be good and Christian, why limit it to one year only? If wicked and sinful, on what pretended right do they claim for themselves the privilege of omitting the peaceful and pious duties of the Christian life, and giving themselves to ‘work wickedness’ for that length of time?” This, Sir, is a mere begging of the question, and is perfectly ridiculous. With extraordinary facility he determines that your efforts are “wicked and sinful,” and that you omit “the peaceful and pious duties of the Christian life,” during the term of one year. He seems never to have imagined that there may be painful duties to discharge, the obligations to which are contingent upon the existence of the necessity which gave those duties being. To prove the weakness of his position, can any thing further be necessary than to remark that, as in the case of the human body, or the body politic, so there may also exist in the body ecclesiastical such a state of disease as not only warrants, but imperiously requires, the application of such remedies as, though severe in their operation, do not affect the character of those who administer them, either for skill or benevolence.

There is in this production much which is beside the mark, for instead of coming to the point at issue, and attempting a demonstration of his principles and



a defence of his party and their recent proceedings, he takes an excursion into the regions of fancy, and generously suggests such charges as would, if established, justify our withdrawal from the fold, as he styles the Methodist inclosure. It is not now my business to follow his wanderings through the maze of subjects over which, with railway rapidity, we are made to pass, consisting as they do of statements allowed and disputable, plain and incomprehensible, scriptural and hypothetical.

The third division of his subject merits our attention, as meeting the question in dispute, and furnishes within itself a triumphant refutation of those charges, frivolous and serious, which from time to time have been preferred against the party in opposition. Let your adversary speak:—"Tyrannical exactions and restraints contrary to Christian liberty would be a justifiable cause for abandoning the societies." Of course he indignantly denies that such cause exists, and shamelessly asserts "that the disputes in our Connexion do not respect *liberty*, but *power*;" that it is on the part of the expelled officers a mere struggle for the mastery, indicative of an insatiable lust for power. How far his statements are established becomes apparent from what follows:—"Power, to be safe, must be distributed; and not simply amongst persons of one class, who, because of identity, may be supposed to entertain similar views, and act together, but amongst different orders of persons, that they may be a check and guard upon each other. This is the theory of the British constitution, and it is both the theory and practice of the Wesleyan economy." Can any thing exceed the effrontery displayed in the concluding part of this sentence. Wesleyan Methodists! can it be that you do not require the production of evidence in support of the shameless assertion that this, or any thing like this, is "the practice of the Wesleyan economy?" Where are the "different orders of persons" who, with undisputed prerogative, constitute the leaders', quarterly, and district meeting, as well special as general, and the Conference? Observe his progress:—"Methodism in its circuits," not in its district meetings and Conference, for here there is "no check and guard," though we silly people thought the principle of general application, not to say of peculiar fitness with respect to the last-named courts, taking into account the extent of their jurisdiction, and the importance of their work. Methodism in its circuits, is *in point of fact* the system in practical operation, and yet if individuals of these "orders," not being "pastors" or travelling preachers, dare to find fault in their capacity of "check and guard," they are at once put down by the "*ruling elder*" in the chair. "Here we find travelling preachers with their prescribed functions," I presume to make, interpret, and administer laws; to expel, either by withholding the ticket of membership, (as in the case of Mr. Whittingham,) or such other plan as may at the time appear expedient; to nominate to *all offices spiritual and financial*, the mischief arising from which is well known and greatly deplored; and to prevent discussion *upon any subject they do not approve*, by vacating the chair, and pronouncing all subsequent proceedings illegal, and as such exposing the actors to summary and condign punishment. Here are "local preachers with their rights distinctly acknowledged;" and are they not to prepare the way of their superiors, to preach in the courts and lanes of our towns, and to travel at their own charges to those hamlets and villages, which are too much afflicted by poverty to become the peculiar care of those who are emphatically called *itinerant preachers*? Here are also "leaders, with their separate meetings and privileges." Meetings separate enough, as all who live in circuits divided have found to their cost, and privileges rent asunder; separated, if you please, until no trace of their identity may be detected. What, I ask, are the privileges of a leader? His duties we know; it may be they are to meet his class weekly, (and what would a leader be divested of this privilege?) and to collect their contributions, that when the quarterly meeting comes he may not be put to shame before his brethren, the sum produced not amounting to the average required.

Then come "trustees, with their *powers* legally secured," to build chapels on their own responsibility; over which, however, they must resign all control, the debts being their own, while the chapels are the preachers.—*Vide* the recent case of the Rochdale trustees.

Subsequently he asserts, that "as far as the question in dispute has taken a tangible shape, its most moderate form is that of rendering the leaders' meeting independent." Who, I inquire, advocates or demands this? His candour appears as he proceeds to explain that this independence consists in opposing the expulsion of themselves by any means "except by the vote of their own majority," allowing only of "an appeal to a quarterly meeting, which is very much like an appeal to themselves." Alas for the interests of truth that the prejudice and passions of

men so blind them as that the most obvious facts, unfavourable to their purpose, fail to be seen! The writer will admit himself in error here if he have any desire to do an antagonist justice. Does he not know that the right you claim is that relating as well to the expulsion of private members as of officers from the society, and will he not admit that an appeal to a quarterly meeting, consisting of "different orders of persons," that is, of travelling preachers, including supernumeraries, trustees, stewards, leaders, and local preachers, is any thing rather than an appeal to themselves? Then denying the claim of a leader to any thing like the character of a representative, and pronouncing the mode of election adopted in the choice of members of Parliament to be in most respects unexceptionable, he asks what is there like this in the appointment of Methodist leaders? We answer very little, indeed, so far as our rules are concerned, as a man but requires to be of respectable character and a preacher's instrument and his appointment follows of course. Though it may suit him to denounce the claims of his opponents un-English, can he deny that the Association leaders are representatives of the people, and does not his soreness arise from the conviction that the very subject of representation is the cause of much of that excitement now so extensively prevalent? What but a determination to have no leaders but those expelled occasioned the secession of so many members of society? In some instances I know leaders have been elected by Association classes, and, no doubt, as the necessity arises some plan equivalent to this will be adopted. He then accuses the officers of the church of a desire for power to oppress the preachers, but will any reasonable being believe the charge that good men, upon any principle which is not equally applicable to travelling preachers, should become so generally opposed to the orderly conduct of church affairs as to seek their own gratification at the expense of peace, spirituality, and the approbation of God? I throw back the charge upon himself and associates,—theirs be the responsibility of scattering firebrands, arrows, and death, by at once declining to make those concessions which conduce to peace, and by attempts to impose new burdens and inflict greater wrong.—I am, yours, sincerely,

October 12, 1835.

A MEMBER OF THE OLD CONNEXION.

## PROCEEDINGS AT EGREMONT.—OUTRAGEOUS CONDUCT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—One of our expelled brethren, a trustee, was appointed to preach yesterday at Egremont, and one of the Conference party was also appointed, but did not attend. The only trustee in Egremont, whom Mr. Watmough has induced to follow him through thick and thin, thought proper to lock the chapel door, in order to keep out the expelled brethren, as well as the Sunday scholars, who are thus deprived of their regular instruction. For the purpose of frustrating this attempt, the expelled brother, being also a trustee, took a square of glass out of one of the back windows, and assisted a young man to get through and open the door inside. Having accomplished his task, the congregation assembled, and Divine service was performed by the expelled brother. He concluded his sermon somewhat earlier than usual, and dismissed the people with an intimation that, as Mr. Watmough intended to administer the Lord's supper at half-past two in the afternoon, it would be well for the people to assemble at one o'clock, when a detailed account would be given of the recent expulsions in Whitehaven.

The people having assembled, the speaker stated the case as briefly as possible, in order to keep within the time appointed by the superintendent, and was about to give out a hymn, when Mr. Watmough rushed in, and cried out as loud as he could, "You have no business here!" Not content with this unmannerly interruption, he immediately ascended the pulpit stairs, and laid hold of the speaker to pull him down. He then wrested the books from the cushion, and laid hold of the speaker round the body in a ruffian-like manner to dislodge him. On being told to desist, he said, "I know you are a trustee, and you are *thieves* and *robbers*," repeating these words over and over again, and added, "I have got the deeds in my pocket."—"Show me them," said the speaker.—"I'll show you them to-morrow morning," replied Mr. Watmough, repeating the words *thieves*, *robbers*, &c. [The reader will bear in mind that this occurrence took place only a few minutes before the time appointed by Mr. Watmough for administering the Sacrament.]

Here the speaker addressed the congregation in the following words:—"Friends, which of the two do you consider the thief? Mr. Watmough says he has got the title-deeds of my property in his pocket?" (Loud cries of "Shame, shame!") After a little more struggling to get the speaker out of the pulpit, (for Mr. Watmough still held fast round his body, and wrestled, unsuccessfully, with all his strength, to remove him from the pulpit,) the speaker calmly told him that he had better loose his hold and allow him to finish. The speaker then gave out a hymn, and part of a verse was sung when the people became so agitated at beholding such riotous conduct in a preacher of the gospel of peace, that the speaker thought it best to conclude with prayer; and whilst the people were praying, Mr. Watmough still continued to bawl out, "Thieves, robbers," &c. The blessing being pronounced, the speaker retired, leaving the greatest part of the congregation and Mr. Watmough together, the people exclaiming that they never saw such scandalous behaviour, that they had never seen Mr. Watmough before, and hoped never to see him again.

Yours, &c.

A LOCAL PREACHER.

Whitehaven, Oct. 19, 1835.

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#### MR. BRAMWELL'S OPINION OF THE CONFERENCE OF 1796.

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The following is so applicable to the times that one might suppose it was written in the present year. It shows that all was not right even in the days of the venerable Bramwell. It was addressed to all the superintendents throughout the kingdom.

DEAR BRETHREN,—My mind has been deeply pained with the present state of our Connexion, and I feel such an anxious solicitude to avert every impending evil, that I am compelled to break through the barrier which my deference to your superior judgment would create, yet affectionately to make this one solemn appeal to you all.

I have long been penetrated with the liveliest sorrow at perceiving a decline of that *burning zeal*, that *active perseverance*, that *vital holiness*, that *lamenting love*, which actuated the first Methodist preachers, and which enabled them victoriously to triumph over every obstacle. Having their hearts filled with a sense of the important undertaking, the fire burning in their own hearts, and swallowed up by love for souls that were bought by the Redeemer's blood, they scorned to lose a moment in disputing about *external forms*; they *deprecated every strife*, but the *noble strife* of excelling each other in enlarging the Redeemer's kingdom. Alas! my brethren, we have entered into their labours, but have we retained their spirit? We are fully satisfied that God has a controversy with us as a body, which causes the present agitation. *We* (the preachers) *want the power of religion among ourselves*. This alone can *perpetuate the union* of love, and then all things would be done in peace and harmony.

When were we asked the state of our souls since we were received into the Connexion? We may be *proud, passionate, envious, malicious, covetous, self-willed, brawlers*, and triflers, given to *jesting, yea tippling*. We may oppose the real work of God, may turn hundreds out of the way, and yet remain *travelling preachers*. Whatever we are when we enter upon the great work of the ministry, we may lose our first love, *zeal, faith, patience, hope, yea, every grace*, and yet go round the circuit, the carrying about the *ghost of a preacher*, "*who being dead yet speaketh*."

Brethren! brethren! is it not time that something should be done to *RE-FORM ourselves*? Have we not for years been labouring in *FORCED UNITY* and *external peace*, debating on forms and shadows, and thereby departing more from our centre? And could things be brought into unity this way, would it not *settle us in formality and unscriptural stillness*? Must not the cause be removed before the effect can cease? The axe must be laid to the root, and then our preaching, conversation, and example will produce, under God, the principle and effect of faith and love, and we shall *all be one* in Christ Jesus. It has been one rule with several of us for years "*to speak evil of no man*," (how awfully is this rule departed from in the present day!) One preacher labours with all his might to bring souls to God,—the next in turn destroys what God hath wrought.

We tenderly call upon every brother to read once more Wesley's Journals, as well as David Brainard's and Thos. Walsh's life, Gillies's Historical Collections,

and Edwards's Evidences. Compare these with the Acts of the Apostles, and the whole with our present mode of proceeding, [ay, and with the mode of proceeding in 1835,] and then determine whether we have not departed from the simplicity of the Gospel, and we intreat every brother to join us in continual prayer to God, that the life and power of true religion may be increased in all our hearts, that we may all be filled with the fullness of God.

Sheffield, Nov. 10, 1796.

I am, your affectionate Servant,

WM. BRAMWELL.

The original letter, of which the following is a copy, is in our possession. Perhaps the respectable owner will have the kindness to favour us with more of the same sort.

DEAR BROTHER,—I like your Leeds address, so do those of our friends that have seen it; I think it the best that has appeared yet,—well calculated to soften the heart, and produce conviction. I am inclined to think there is some mistake respecting the majority of the Hundred; it cannot be that they approve of the Broadmead trustees. If they do, 'tis from worldly, political motives. I trust the Lord will disappoint Mr. Mather, Thompson, and Benson: they are not content with being brethren,—they want to be *masters*. How easy 'tis to know a high church bigot; they cannot speak without being in a passion. May the Lord remove this evil from them! Benson has left off preaching on a Friday night in Broadmead, also morning preaching; scarce any came to hear him: and I am told Mr. Mather is in fear of the thirty-seven leaders, who wish for the sacrament, coming to him, to let him know their mind on that subject. I know but three of the friendly trustees of Manchester,—Mr. Higginbottom, ropemaker; Mr. Berwick, cotton manufacturer; and Mr. Lomas, steward of the Society. I believe these are active and hearty in the cause. Send me, if you please, thirty more of your addresses; I shall send you one hundred of the considerations. My wife joins me in love to you and Mrs. —. From your affectionate brother,

Dec. 12, 1794.

WM. MYLES.

#### DECLARATION OF THE EDINBURGH WESLEYAN METHODIST QUARTERLY MEETING.

During the past year various attempts were made in this Meeting to show Conference the need of a change in certain assumed parts of church government and discipline, but which were invariably counteracted, the meeting being urged to *wait till Conference, when, in all probability, something would be done* to satisfy the just and reasonable wishes of the people. Conference has met, and nothing is done to allay the discontent of the various Circuits; but we conceive it is rather intended to rivet us more securely under a domination at variance with our liberties as New Testament believers, and members of the Society established by the Rev. J. Wesley; we therefore now declare—

I. That while we would deprecate any attempt to encroach upon the legitimate authority which belongs to the ministerial office, we nevertheless consider it contrary both to Scripture and reason, for ministers to claim or exercise the entire and absolute power, in matters of church government and discipline, and, therefore, we *protest* against the note prefixed to the stations in the Minutes of this year, which appears to invest a superintendent with unlimited and uncontrolled authority to conduct the ordinances, and administer the discipline of the church, in any manner most agreeable to himself.

II. That it is a scriptural and decided principle with us, that no member, whether official or private, should be expelled, but with the consent of a majority in a Leaders' Meeting; and we have always understood, that the rules of the Methodist Society were founded on this principle. We are persuaded that the regulations of 1797 will not fairly admit of any other construction: and, in the edition of the "rules" published in 1800, by the Conference agent which some of us, on becoming members of Society, received from the preachers,) it is expressly stated that "no leader can be put out of his place, and no member expelled from Society, but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting;" we therefore dissent from the judgment given by the Conference on this law, and object to its adoption in this Circuit.



III. That we consider the Quarterly Meetings proper occasions for discussing any subject connected with the affairs of the Circuit, or of the Connexion at large, and for communicating with Conference, and, therefore, protest against the "Special Circuit Meeting," so partially constituted, and so illiberally restricted, as specified in the Minutes, and which goes to divest the Quarterly Meeting of their legitimate rights.

IV. That we disapprove of any attempt or regulation, which would prohibit one Circuit from noticing any public occurrence or violation of *general* right and privilege in any other Circuit, which prohibition would manifestly destroy the connexional form of the body, at first designated by John Wesley the "United Society," and would overthrow the oft-repeated boast of the preachers, "that the Methodists are *one family* all over the world."

The meeting, with *one* exception, (preachers exclusive,) adopted the above declaration.

Edinburgh, Oct. 9, 1835.

## A CONFERENCE PREACHER'S STEP TOWARDS PEACE AND UNITY.

### TO THE MEMBERS OF THE WESLEYAN SOCIETY.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the Wesleyan Chapel, held on Friday evening last, it was recommended by Mr. Benjamin Hartley, and supported by Messrs. Cartwright and Hardman, and unanimously agreed to by the Trustees present, that Mr. Thomas Smith be requested to resume his place as leader of the singers in the said chapel.

Mr. Thomas Smith very kindly acceded to the wishes of the Trustees, and accordingly took his place yesterday morning, accompanied by the singers who have usually assisted in conducting the singing.

As is the usual custom, he waited upon the preacher, (Mr. M'Owen,) for a copy of the hymns that would be sung at the morning service, when the Reverend Gentleman, in a manner the most insulting, refused to give them, saying,—"*We can do very well without you,—I won't give you the hymns.*"

Whether Mr. M'Owen was ignorant of the invitation to Mr. Smith having been forwarded from the trustee meeting, at the request of three of his "principal friends;"—whether at the moment he was thinking of his duties as a plaintiff in Chancery; or whether, in his reckless determination to injure the trust property, he strikes alike at friend or foe, I leave you to judge; and I have no doubt you would be greatly surprised when acquainted with the fact, that *immediately* after this exhibition of temper (by which the singers, who are members of our society, were driven away to the New Connexion Chapel,) **HE, ON HIS KNEES, IN THE PULPIT, thanked God for the PEACE and PROSPERITY of the body.**

Rochdale, October 19, 1835.

A WESLEYAN METHODIST.

## MR. WESLEY'S OPINION OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—In the *Conference Magazine* for October appears an article on the Pastoral Office, in which the most extraordinary powers are claimed on behalf of the regular ministry; those who but occasionally "labour in word and doctrine" being, of course, carefully excluded from any participation therein. The prerogative to receive and expel from church communion is declared to be a divine and inalienable right of the clergy alone, and to substantiate the claim, copious extracts are made from the works of the late Rev. R. Baxter, though I do not perceive that there is any intention to supply us as well with *his opinions on the duties*, as on the *authority* of their office. Why Baxter rather than Wesley should have been consulted, I leave the writer to explain; meanwhile I would furnish, for the benefit of the Methodist public and Conference, the opinion of the latter on the subject; who, though himself a clergyman, and with recorded early prejudices against the participation of the laity in what he had been accustomed to consider the rights of his order, remarks as follows:—"One of the circumstances which contributed chiefly to preserve sanctity in the Christian church, was the right of excluding from thence such as had been guilty of enormous transgressions. *This*

*right was vested in the church, from the earliest period of its existence, by the Apostles themselves, and was exercised by each Christian assembly upon its respective members. The rulers denounced the persons whom they thought unworthy of church-communion, and, (the people approving,) pronounced the decisive sentence.*—*Ecclesiastical History*, compiled and published by the Rev. J. Wesley, and printed by J. Paramore, at the Foundry, Moorfields, 1781, p. 66.

The following, from the same volume, page 94, I consider peculiarly seasonable:—"These councils, (alluding to assemblies so called, or, as we designate them, Conferences,) of which we find not the smallest trace before the middle of this century, changed the face of the church, for by them the privileges of the people were diminished, and the authority of the bishops greatly augmented. At their first appearance in these councils, they acknowledged that *they were no more than the delegates of their respective churches*. But they imperceptibly extended the limits of their authority, and asserted that *Christ has empowered them to prescribe to his people authoritative rules of faith and manners*. Another effect of these councils was, the gradual abolition of that perfect equality which reigned among all bishops in the primitive times. For decency required that some one of the provincial bishops met in council should be invested with a superior degree of authority, and hence the rights of Metropolitans derive their origin. In the meantime the bounds of the church were enlarged; the custom of holding councils was followed wherever the Gospel reached, and the universal church had the appearance of one vast republic, formed by a combination of a great number of little states. This occasioned the creation of a new order of Ecclesiastics, who were appointed in different parts of the world, as heads of the church, to preserve the consistence of that immense body, so widely dispersed throughout the nations. Such was the office of the *patriarchs*, among whom, at length, *ambition being arrived at its most insolent period*, formed a new dignity, investing the bishop of Rome, and his successors, with the authority of *prince of the patriarchs*."—I am, &c.

A WESLEYAN METHODIST.

Liverpool, October 27, 1835.

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

The first anniversary of the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, will be held at the Music-hall, Liverpool, on Monday next, the 9th instant, when a report of the proceedings of the Committee will be read, and the accounts submitted to the meeting. The attendance of friends from a distance will be acceptable. Tea at half-past five o'clock precisely, after which a collection will be made in aid of the general objects of the Association.

The *Watchman* unwittingly admits the exclusive spirit of the Conference preachers, and acknowledges that the Wesleyans (he ought to have said the *unsound*, or Conference party) are "less alive to the value of the Bible Society than their fellow Protestants." The same remark might be made with equal propriety in regard to the Bethel Union. It has been usual to grant the use of Pitt-street chapel to the friends of the Bethel Union on the occasion of their anniversary; but this year the Rev. Geo. Marsden, for reasons best known to himself, thought proper to refuse the request. Fortunately, however, the interests of religion, and the cause of British seamen, suffered no loss in con-

sequence of the lukewarmness of his Reverence. Instead of the customary sermon, by the Wesleyan Superintendent, in Pitt-street chapel, which was last year followed by a collection, amounting to £4, Mr. David Rowland preached to an overflowing congregation in the Music-hall, when the collection amounted to £10 3s. The anniversary meeting was held, as usual, in the Independent Chapel, Great George-street, John Cropper, Esq. in the chair. We observed on the platform, the Rev. Dr. Raffles, the Rev. Messrs. Kelly, Bakewell, Caruthers, Lister, Fisher, Spence, Peart, and Messrs. A. Hodgson, David Rowland, S. Hope, and several other gentlemen. The meeting was exceedingly interesting, and we were glad to learn that the funds are increasing.—In the course of an able speech, Mr. D. Rowland said, he had the honour to present a donation of ten sovereigns from two ladies belonging, he was happy to add, to the Wesleyan Methodist Association. After several excellent speeches were delivered, a committee was formed for the following year, among whom we noticed Dr. Raffles, Sir John Tobin, Samuel Hope, James

Cropper, John Cropper, Adam Hodgson, Nicholas Hurry, Esqs. and Messrs. C. H. Jones, Josiah Jones, Thomas Bully, D. Rowland, John Job, Richard Farrer, J. P. Knowles, D. Marples, John Jones, and several others.

*Liverpool.—Something new in Methodism.*—A friend of mine, who, until very lately, met in class with Mr. B——ws, has been for a long time “seeing men as trees walking.” Of late she has become a decided reformer, and told Mr. B., her leader, that she could meet no longer with him, though she regretted it very much, for she loved her leader greatly, but it was from *principle* she acted. This same person, who is very respectable, was waited upon by another newly-appointed leader at Brunswick Chapel, requesting she would meet with her. My friend said “No, I cannot do that, for I have left my old leader (whom I loved much) from principle, and he begged of me to continue with him, and that I should not be asked to contribute as heretofore.” The new leader replied, “You may come and meet with me upon the same terms.” Now, Sir, this is cheap Gospel enough, and what we never heard of before in Methodism, except towards the poorest of the poor.

HONESTUS.

Mr. J. Livesey, of Bury, was brought to trial on Friday, the 9th of October, when he was found guilty of presiding at the Rochdale Association meeting. Mr. Walsh, the superintendent, deferred giving judgment seven days, though pressed by Mr. Livesey and the leaders and trustees present, to finish the business that night, as they well knew that his expulsion was predetermined. Mr. Livesey, finding entreaties of no avail, gave up his Class-book, saying, “he was determined not to walk the streets of Bury with the sentence hanging over his head.”—On Saturday, the 17th of October, at seven o'clock in the evening, a meeting of the members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society was held in the Bethel Independent Chapel, Henry-street, to take into consideration the measures necessary to be adopted, in the present agitated state of the Society.—Mr. Hesketh, from Manchester, was in the chair. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Livesey, of Bury, Dr. Warren, the Rev. Mr. Graham, and Messrs. Hughes and Taylor, from Manchester. Resolutions were moved and carried unanimously, expressive of deep sympathy with those persons throughout the Connexion who are suffering for attempting to obtain a Reform in Methodism, especially with Mr. James Live-

sey, and of a determination to support him, and any other of the officers and members of the circuit, who might suffer in like manner.

*Blackburn.*—On Wednesday, the 21st ult., a meeting of the friends of Wesleyan Reform took place in the Theatre. The assembly (numerous and highly respectable as it was) was indicative of a new and more liberal spirit being established amongst the great body of Wesleyan Methodists; it proclaims the downfall of that intolerant and absolute power vested in the hands of the Conference Lords, whose dictum has been hitherto unquestioned; and being so, has swelled their aristocratical minds to such a bulk of self-importance, that they have presumed to moot their own infallibility. A new era has, however, sprung up. The cry is now “Wesleyanism as it was,” not as it is. As might have been anticipated, the announcement of the intended meeting was viewed by the Tory Methodists of Blackburn with dismay; and with that characteristic of little and contracted minds, which turns every cause into ridicule, however hallowed or pure, but not consanguine with their own views, they issued a senseless and contemptible hand-bill, ridiculing the object of the meeting. After singing and prayer, Mr. James Livesey, of Bury, was called to the chair. The speakers were Messrs. D. Rowland, Hughes, Taylor, Lees, and the Rev. Dr. Warren.

*Wesleyan Reform.*—The cause of Wesleyan Reform goes on prosperously.—The Conferential despots have goaded their victims to such a degree, that even the most passive members of the Connexion consider it no longer a virtue to yield obedience, but a duty they owe to themselves and to their children, to combine, in one compact body, to release themselves from the web of tyranny, which priestly ambition and domination have contrived to weave around them. No despotism that ever swayed the destinies of an unfortunate people could possibly be more intolerable than the tyrannical proceedings of the Parsonocracy of the Methodist Conference. They sit with closed doors, refuse all access to the people by whom they are supported—and treat their petitions with the most sovereign contempt! No Christian community that the world ever saw has been more unjustly dealt with by its Ministers than the Wesleyan body by the insolent aristocratical faction whom their liberality has raised to the station they occupy. The spell, however, is broken: the more

enlightened and independent, and consequently the more valuable, portion of the Connexion have resolved no longer to submit to the galling yoke of Conferential dominion. They demand, as they have a right to do, a participation in the government of the body of which they form a part, and until this is conceded to them they never ought to be, and we trust never will be, satisfied. For the attainment of a salutary control in their own affairs, the Methodists are forming associations in every quarter, and the determination they have come to is to "stop the supplies" until their rights are extended to them. In Blackburn a numerous and respectable meeting was held on Wednesday evening last, at which the abominations perpetrated under the present system were portrayed by those who best understand their effects; and on the following evening a similar meeting was held at Clitheroe. In each of these places the Wesleyan body are all but unanimous in their demand for a redress of grievances; and as we have no hope whatever that the blind bigots who rule in Conference, will make any concession until it is wrung from them, it is more than probable that the whole Methodist Connexion will be convulsed to its very centre. This is the certain consequence of men subjecting themselves wholly to priestly control. The Methodists have suffered dreadfully from this defect in their system, and they have at length determined to amend it. They have made a noble commencement, and if their exertions continue commensurate with the importance of the object they have in view, all the priestcraft in the world cannot deprive them of success. Let them unite, and they must conquer.—*Blackburn Gazette*.

*Whitehaven, October 19.*—Yesterday we opened a large warehouse (Birley's) for public worship, and it was crowded to excess. Messrs. R. Gordon and R. Wilson are appointed to secure a piece of ground for a Tabernacle.

The Hull Wesleyan Methodist Association has taken the Freemasons' Hall, in Mytongate, in addition to the "Tabernacle," for the purpose of a Sunday-school and chapel. The room will hold about 400 persons.

The greater part of the Wesleyan Methodists in New Basford, in advocating the principles of religious liberty, having been obliged to withdraw from their chapel in Mount-street, have commenced building a new chapel in Pepper-street, (a central part of New Basford.)—*Nottingham Review*.

We are authorized to say that the venerable Jos. Sutcliffe, A.M., warned certain of his brethren amongst the Wesleyan Methodist preachers not to attempt to deny the authority of the publications of 1798 and 1800, which, however, they have the audacity to stigmatize as spurious. "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord?"—*Christian Advocate*.

Mr. Charles Parker, of Darlington, assigns the following reasons for his retirement from the Wesleyan Society:—

*First*,—That "Methodism as it is" is not Methodism as it *was*, when, twenty-two years ago, I entered the Society. I will select the following, reserving the remainder to some future opportunity:—that the constitution as settled by *solemn compact* in 1795 and 1797, between the Preachers of the one part and the Delegates of the people of the other, has in several instances been violated by the official representatives of the Conference, during the last eight years, and has recently been *subverted* in its most important articles by the Conference itself.

*Second*,—That "Methodism as it is" under the influence of a priestly *Oligarchy*, and the passive acquiescence of a *prostrate* Conference, requires of me to forego, not merely my natural rights as a man, my civil rights as a Briton, but also my scriptural rights as a Christian.

*Third*,—That I cannot, conscientiously, in any way continue to give my countenance and support to Methodism in its present *deteriorated* form, prostituted as I conceive it to be to false notions of ministerial power, or assumed official prerogative; but, on the contrary, I feel it now to be my bounden duty, not only as a man who has been *officially* deprived of his religious rights, but as the public friend of civil and religious liberty, to do all that in me lies to aid in arresting the progress of that ghostly tyranny, in the Wesleyan Conference, which has already enslaved its tens of thousands, and which, if not arrested, will go forward to extend its baneful influence over society at large.

*London.*—According to advertisement the first public meeting of the London Wesleyan Methodist Association was held at Providence Hall, Finsbury-square, on Monday evening, Oct. 19, 1835, for the purpose of stating the circumstances which had led to the formation of the above Association, and the object it proposed to accomplish. The room, though large, was crowded to excess, and hundreds sought admittance who were unable to gain it. The chair was taken at seven o'clock by Mr. R. Barford, and the meeting opened with singing and prayer. After the Chairman had addressed the meeting at some length, Mr. Eckett made a most lucid statement of facts which electrified the audience.



"We have heard much good speaking in our time," says the *Christian Advocate*, "but we solemnly declare, that, for persuasiveness and convincing force, we never heard any thing superior to Mr. Eckett's powerful, unanswerable, and irresistible address." The meeting was adjourned to this day. The London Association declare that the Wesleyan itinerant preachers have, of late, assumed to possess higher ministerial prerogatives than are claimed by any other body of Protestant Christian ministers; asserting that they have Divine authority to make laws, and to enforce them, by expelling from the church fellowship whomsoever they may determine ought, for refusing to obey them, to be expelled, and now have publicly declared, in the Minutes of this year, 1835, their determination to maintain those assumed prerogatives. That, therefore, it is requisite that all lawful and proper means be employed to obtain for the Wesleyan Societies their just and Scriptural rights as to their government, and exemption from the unscriptural ministerial domination now claimed over them. If this be not done, the character of the Wesleyan preachers will ultimately become depraved, Methodism be corrupted, enslaved, and debased, and so become a curse to the world, instead of a blessing.

This Association is founded upon a recognition of the following propositions:—

I. That, as the Holy Scriptures contain a sufficient rule of faith and practice, the church of Christ ought not to be required to submit to any ecclesiastical human au-

thority or rule, except as required in the word of God.

II. That no one class of officers in the church has authority from the Bible to exercise exclusive power in the government of the church.

III. That ecclesiastical history proves, that all the corruptions of Christianity originated in the depravation of the character of its ministers, and that such depravation was consequent upon their advancement in worldly rank, and upon their having been allowed, by degrees, to assume to themselves the entire government of the church.

"Hitherto we have depended for information concerning the Wesleyan Movement upon the communications of our correspondents, and that for this reason, that it was confined to the provinces. Now, however, that the metropolitan societies have joined their brethren in denouncing the proceedings of the Conference, we are able to speak of what we have seen with our own eyes and heard with our own ears. We thank the preachers for having stifled the voice of the people in their local meetings. If they had not, we should never have heard of these public meetings, by which they will soon be brought to their proper level in men's esteem. The next meeting will be held in Finsbury Chapel, Moorfields, a place that will hold more people than City-road Chapel, and that will be filled, we make no doubt, with attentive, and, before all is over, indignant hearers. We shall see whether these men will 'make no impression in London, where they are known,' or not."—*Christian Advocate*.

#### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Honestus* is informed that it would be highly improper on our part were we officiously to undertake the defence of individuals who do not themselves think any such defence at all necessary.

*Julius* is received, but too late to be attended to this week. It would oblige us if correspondents would favour us with their communications earlier in the week.

We have apprized Dr. Warren of the application from Worksop.

*Seneca*—T. T.—*A Reformer*, and various other communications shall be noticed in our next publication.

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No. 28 will be published on Wednesday, the 18th of November.

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# THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN;

INTENDED

TO THROW LIGHT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEYAN  
METHODIST CONFERENCE, AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

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No. 28.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 18, 1835.

Price 2d.

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"Let no man, nor number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, till it has been first appointed by the Conference."—*Conference Law.*

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## THE METROPOLITAN PRESS.

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In almost every place where Methodism is known, the principles of the Wesleyan Methodist Association have been adopted and acted upon, and now that they are rapidly spreading throughout the great metropolis of this kingdom, the *Watchman* would fain persuade its readers that the controversy is asleep! The *London Courier*, of the 9th instant, from which we extract the following, has, however, compelled the *Watchman* reluctantly to advert to the Appeal to the British public, against the priestly and political power of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, which appeared in our last number, and which has been inserted in the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Sun*, the *Christian Advocate*, and several provincial papers. So far from being finished, the controversy is but in its infancy; witness the numbers which Conference bigotry has driven from the chapels, and witness the numbers of Tabernacles built and about to be built in various parts of England by such as have been thus driven away by priestly tyranny. Some time since Mr. George Marsden, superintendent of the Liverpool South Circuit, inquired, "What do the gentlemen in the news-rooms say of the Methodist preachers?" Let Mr. Marsden refer to the *Courier*. No doubt every one who has calmly noticed this extraordinary controversy must have observed the different spirit and temper which have been manifest in the parties concerned in it. On one hand, the forbearance which has shown itself on the side of religious liberty, willing to think and let think; and on the other hand, the positive, lordly, overbearing spirit of violence, as though they had received some very material injury, because they are not allowed to play the tyrant over their brethren.

Impartial persons cannot have failed to observe, and will bear in remembrance that, by the laws of Methodism, no member can be legally expelled, except by the consent of a *majority* of a leaders' meeting; and Mr. Marsden may rest assured that "the gentlemen in the news-rooms" are aware of the dishonourable shuffling and gross prevarication by which the preachers have vainly sought to deny the genuineness and authenticity of the rule containing the word "*majority*," and published by their own authority in 1798, and in 1800. In addition to the many incontrovertible proofs already adduced, we quote the following remarkable passage from a work, entitled "*A Defence of the Methodists who do not attend the National Church*," by the late Mr. Thomas Taylor, published in 1814:—

"Those persons who are now so adverse to any deviation from

*original Methodism, either in doctrine or discipline, should reflect, that heretofore they have given their most strenuous exertions to effect, and, indeed, have effected very important changes in the discipline of the Methodist societies. These brethren are well persuaded that the entire of the original discipline of Methodism, 'as established by our late venerable Founder,' is changed. Thus the power which originally rested in the superintendent is now transferred to a leaders' meeting. This cannot be disproved."*

And yet, although it is notorious that old laws are altered, and new ones enacted almost every year, Mr. George Marsden,—when it suited his convenience illegally to expel several of the brethren in March last, because they deprecated excommunications on any ground save that of gross immorality,—had the hardihood to assert that *the rules were as Mr. Wesley left them, and there was not one word altered in them.* It was on that occasion that Mr. Marsden, for the first time, broached the extraordinary doctrine, that "a man might never read the word of God, use family or private prayer, attend public worship, class meetings, or the Lord's Supper, and yet not be immoral,"—doctrine which Mr. Wesley would have denounced as false and heretical,—doctrine never before delivered by a Methodist preacher in the vestry of a Methodist chapel,—which neither Mr. Marsden nor any other preacher durst proclaim from the pulpit,—and doctrine totally unprecedented in every Christian community in which no standard of morality is or can be acknowledged but that of the Bible, which commands us to "Keep holy the Sabbath day." It is clear, therefore, that in this, as well as in every other case, the cause *assigned* was not the *true* cause of expulsion; and Mr. Marsden himself, not the brethren, ought to have been expelled.

Neither can it have escaped the penetration of even the most superficial observer, that the absurd and contradictory reasons assigned in recent cases of expulsion have involved the preachers in a dilemma from which they will find it impossible to extricate themselves. If they retain in Connexion all those dissatisfied persons who are known to be opposed to their arbitrary proceedings, such persons will be found to act upon the body "as a little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump." If, on the other hand, they carry out their principles impartially to the full extent, as they ought to do, and expel all who manifest their abhorrence of such principles, then they will soon find themselves reduced to a wretched minority. In either case, the final overthrow of Conference despotism is inevitable.

It is somewhat remarkable that the props on which the Conference party leaned for support ever since they first violated the articles of Pacification of 1795, and the Concessions made at Leeds in 1797, have been gradually falling; and the fall was accelerated by the discovery of Dr. Warren, that these Laws and Concessions were omitted to be recorded,—because it is enacted in the Deed of Declaration, commonly called Mr. Wesley's Poll Deed, "that no law, rule, or regulation should be *binding* on any preacher, officer, or other member of the Connexion, unless inserted in the journals, and signed by the President and Secretary for the time being." The chief aim of Conference was, to keep the Connexion, rich and poor, in utter ignorance of the secret machinery by which they acquired, and still struggle to maintain, arbitrary and irresponsible power. Hence their duplicity and quibbling in regard to the word "majority," above alluded to,—their abuse of

private character, instead of attempts to refute public argument,—and their enactment of that infamous law selected for our motto, which ought to be known to every Briton from John o' Groat's to the Land's End. The exclusive possession of the chapels, which the preachers have cunningly contrived to secure to themselves, will shortly become of no avail, in consequence of the erection of Tabernacles by the voluntary contributions of the people, without entailing heavy expenses on those who attend; and as to the support which Conference may derive through the corrupt influence of a few wealthy individuals, it cannot be of long continuance; and the people, in all probability, will not have long to wait till corruption shall have exhausted the means of corruption.

In the beginning of this controversy it was a favourite saying of the superintendents, "Why speak of these things out of doors?—such disputes should be settled in the vestry." To this artful endeavour to stifle inquiry, it was well replied by Mr. D. Rowland, on his mock trial,—“The time of secrecy and concealment is gone by. It is the privacy within the walls of a chapel vestry, systematically enforced and observed, especially when acts of priestly tyranny have been perpetrated, which has encouraged our preachers to go to the present lengths.” This system, responded the Association, is now at an end, and the acts of those “who love darkness rather than light,” for a reason which shall be nameless, shall henceforward have the cloak of concealment torn from them, and be exposed to the light, though it be but the feeble glimmer of a *Watchman's Lantern*. And now, at the end of our first year's holy warfare, it is declared in the London newspapers, by the splendid writer alluded to by the *Courier*, that “the subject shall be brought before the whole British public and the supreme legislation, and lastly, before that all determining tribunal—the tribunal of *public opinion*, until it be seen what the truth is, and whether that truth shall stand or fall.”

“A very remarkable advertisement is published in our pages to-day. According to that, it appears that while the public of England, with the usual tact of those who seek to promote delusion, has had its attention sedulously directed to the distant danger of Popery in Ireland, there has grown up in England itself, having its seat in the heart of the metropolis, an ecclesiastical power, claiming to bind and to loose, as great almost as the Papacy itself in its present state of decay. We beg the attention of our readers to the advertisement from the Methodist Association, which is headed ‘Appeal to the British Public.’ That advertisement asserts that upwards of one million of our countrymen are inclosed within the toils of an ecclesiastical economy, which asserts the divine right of an irresponsible priesthood to legislate in all matters of doctrine. This is the revival of Papacy in the fulness of its power. Some of our contemporaries have of late made a great noise about the Catholic priests of Ireland using the consolations of religion to obtain political influence; but, according to the advertisement, 100 elders of an irresponsible priesthood maintain a legal right over all the places of worship belonging to the one million of persons connected with the Wesleyan Conference, and can open and shut them at pleasure, and appoint what Ministers they please, though these buildings are all raised and supported by voluntary subscription. These elders, too, use the power of excommunication, as well as the Churches of England and Rome, and, irresponsible as they are, can compel all the individuals of numerous congregations, who have subscribed to build and support their meeting houses, to submit to their will or see themselves excluded from the society of their Christian brethren. But what seems still worse, according to the advertisement,



is, that this irresponsible priesthood take an active part in politics, and, standing aloof till the battle is about to be decided, they throw their weight into one scale, and give the victory to that party they, for the moment, think proper to support. If this be a correct picture of the Methodist Conference we can no longer wonder at the assiduity with which our contemporary, the *Standard*, flatters and courts the Methodists. In our boyish days there was fierce contention betwixt the Methodists and the Churchmen,—the former were the continual theme of the jibes of the latter, but now the Methodists are described by the *Standard* as almost part and parcel of the Church itself. Is this explained by the power they have acquired? It has long been the plan of one class of politicians to insult and trample on the people of every sect or opinion different from their own, as long as those other people were weak and unable to defend themselves; but the instant they have grown powerful, this class of politicians has anxiously sought their aid, that they might preserve, as long as possible, the power they have always abused. Are the Methodists, then, courted because they may turn the political scale in favour of a party? We earnestly recommend the advertisement to public attention.”—*Courier*.

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### ECCLESIASTICAL JOURNAL.

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The *Ecclesiastical Journal* for this month contains an able review of the First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction (Ireland,) presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of His Majesty. The commissioners seem to have discharged their duty with great diligence and impartiality; at all events, there can be no ground of complaint on the part of the members of the Established Church, to whose ministers, in every parish, letters were addressed, informing them what plan would be adopted in the inquiry, soliciting their aid in its completion, and giving them the opportunity of checking the report of the enumerators appointed for the population return. We select the following extracts:—

“The report of the commissioners contains a statement, tending very strongly to show that, in this official statistical statement, the Establishment has the advantage of swelling her numbers by the inclusion of a large class of persons who ought, as we contend, upon every principle of fairness, to have been given to the Dissenters. We transcribe the very words of the report:—

“It is observable that the census of the members of the Established Church includes a considerable number of Wesleyan Methodists, who, although attending religious service in other places of worship, consider themselves to be in connexion with the Established Church, and wished to be classed as members of that body. We do not report the particular number of these persons, but that it is considerable, especially in some districts, will appear from an inspection of the number of their places of worship, enumerated in our reports, and the average number of persons attending Divine service in each.”—p. 5.

“Of this truth we, and the general body of Dissenters, in name as well as practice, are, and long have been, fully aware. Anxious not to say any thing offensive to a large class of the religious community, for whose zeal, devotedness, and abundant labours of love, we feel the highest possible respect, we have never before alluded to a subject which has often excited our astonishment, and they must excuse us for adding, has, on some public occasions, brought a smile upon our countenances, not so consistent as we could have wished with the other feelings created at such meetings. We allude, of course, to their classing themselves with the supporters of an Establishment at whose places of worship they never, or scarcely ever, attend,—whose ministers perform towards them no pastoral duties,—whose ritual they have well nigh abandoned, or, in the few chapels where it is retained, have treated with so little consideration as to follow its ample and,

we will add, in some parts, beautiful petitions and confessions, with a long extemporary prayer, useful and appropriate only as a substitution for its forms, or to supply its deficiencies. This is their *nonconformity* with the church of which they style themselves members; let us mark a point or two of *conformity* with the Dissenters, whose name they scorn to bear, but whose legislative protections they are compelled to share. Like theirs, the places of worship of the Wesleyan Methodists are built and supported by voluntary contributions,—registered under the act giving to the chapels and meeting-houses of Dissenters the protection of the law against the interruption of worship, according to modes and forms condescendingly *tolerated* by the State Church. As Dissenting teachers, and as Dissenting teachers only, the whole body of their ministers, supported also by voluntary contributions from their people, claim, and must claim, but upon a representation that they are such, exemption from parochial and other civil offices—from serving on juries, and other burthens of the state, from which, as such, they, by various statutes, are exempted. All their ministers,—with the exception, it may be, of one or two, who, having been ordained to the exercise of the priestly office in the Church of England, on the maxim of once a priest always a priest, are still in holy orders,—are classed by our laws, civil and ecclesiastical, with the ‘persons in pretended holy orders,’ who, to all intents and purposes, are laymen only in their view. Nor ought it to be deemed a reflection upon them, when we add, what is notoriously the fact, that their ecclesiastical policy practically admits of a greater deviation than that of any other body of Dissenters, except the Quakers, from the established order of the Church to which they profess to belong; and, therefore, of necessity, in all things, to conform (for that is of the very essence of an establishment) limiting the preaching and teaching of the word to those who are ordained ministers, and are devoted exclusively to that sacred calling; for amongst them, Sabbath after Sabbath, the pulpits of many of their places of worship are filled by laymen, who, on the Saturday night before, were, as they will be on the Monday morning, and throughout the week, following, behind their counters, or in their counting-houses, the ordinary occupations of their secular callings. It was this worthy, laborious, and we doubt not very useful class of men, who were most affected by the celebrated bill of Lord Sidmouth, imposing restrictions on Dissenting teachers and preachers, (for Churchmen it could not touch,) against which the whole body of Wesleyan Methodists most probably petitioned and protested, in cordial union with other bodies of Dissenters, amongst whom, we believe, on that occasion, and that occasion only, have they been found at what we cannot but consider their proper post. Whether we are right in this view, or Methodists and Churchmen are properly classed together, must be determined by others, satisfying ourselves, as we do, with stating facts, called for by their own conduct, in making a public pretension to a position affecting the members of the Episcopal Establishment. How their claim to fraternity will be received by the prelates and dignitaries of that establishment—how rather it would be received by them and the whole high church party, were no end of their own to be served, by availing themselves of the numerical advantage of a union which they, at the same time, have not done any thing to acknowledge, is matter rather for the consideration of the Methodists than for ourselves.”

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It has long been matter of surprise, both to Churchmen and Dissenters, that Methodists, otherwise well informed, should follow the example of Dr. Bunting, and boast of their warm attachment to the Church of England, seeing that they have deserted, and, (like Mr. Wesley,) reviled her ministers, forsaken her ordinances, and formed themselves into a distinct sect. Some, indeed, argue that they are no farther separated from the Established Church than they are driven from it by the “ignorance or wickedness of the clergymen, who ought to minister to them in holy things.” But an early and able writer on the subject of Methodism solves the question more satisfactorily. He says, “the Conference agreed several times not to separate from the

Church,—namely, an avowed separation,—so as not to admit members into the Society unless they would leave the Church, which is the case with most Dissenters, if not all. Wherever the sanction of Conference is brought in as not approving of a separation, it is that general avowed separation which will admit no members into the Society but such as will leave the Church; and such a separation I will vote against this day." In another part of his work he admits that a virtual separation has taken place. "We do find many things in the liturgy of the Church contrary to the word of God, and which the Nonconformists in the last century very justly objected to, as in the office of Baptism, the Visitation of the Sick, and the Burial of the Dead, and that of Confirmation, though we do not lay so much stress on those matters; yet as they are the old relics of Popery it is a pity they are not removed out of the way, as it is to be feared they are no small curse to thousands: and if the Church was right; if the rulers were such ministers as the word of God warrants, they would soon remove these monuments of idolatry out of the way, and would serve them as Hezekiah did the brass serpent. What have we our Bibles for, but that, in life and doctrine, we may walk thereby?"

We subjoin a few curious extracts from the works of the late Rev. Thomas Taylor, published in the year 1793, which strengthen the arguments of the *Ecclesiastical Journal*, and are well worthy of an attentive perusal:—

"It has been observed that Mr. Wesley was educated in high church principles, and was strongly attached to them till God taught him better. He retained all the fundamental doctrines of the church to the end of his life; he also loved the liturgy of the church, for the most part, especially the prayers; but he certainly was under a necessity to act as a Dissenter in many respects, or he would have done very little good,—he would have been tied hand and foot. But that he acted as a Dissenter is certain, and he is obliged tacitly to acknowledge it in several instances. Indeed the canons\* require so strict obedience from every clergyman to their ordinary, that almost every step Mr. Wesley has taken has been in opposition thereunto.

"1st. By preaching in all parts of England, both in the open air and in houses, without license from any bishop or archbishop.

"2d. By erecting societies, independent of the bishops, and bringing them under rules and discipline of his own.

"3d. By having chapels built, and preaching and administering the Lord's Supper in them without their being consecrated.

"4th. By admitting men to preach who were not ordained by a bishop; calling a synod every year, and calling every preacher to an account concerning his conduct and doctrine, and then appointing them their destination the ensuing year; sending them into all parts of the land, yea and into other lands also; a more extensive jurisdiction than any bishop ever assumed, except the Bishop of Rome.

"5th. By formally ordaining men, not only to preach, but also to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

"6th. By constantly preaching and administering the Lord's Supper in those dissenting chapels in Spitalfields, West-street, and the City-road, when in London.

"If all this does not make a man a Dissenter, it is hard to tell what does. Nay, I will appeal to all the Universities in Christendom, and to all the divines and civilians in the land, and if they will not announce Mr. Wesley, and all the preachers in connexion with him, Dissenters, I will promise to preach no more.

"Nay, we cannot preach but as Dissenters; we are liable to fine, and the houses in which we preach are liable to be fined, as well as our hearers, without being licensed, yea, and licensed as Dissenters; nay, Mr. Wesley himself was liable to

\* "Let one canon speak for many. Canon 12.—Whosoever shall affirm that it is lawful for any sort of ministers or lay persons to make rules, orders, and constitutions, in causes ecclesiastical, without the King's authority, and shall submit to be ruled and governed by them, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored but only by the archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of his wicked error. Thus we see that Mr. Wesley was liable to a most terrible excommunication for he made rules without the King's authority."

this, and so is every clergyman who goes beyond the bound of his jurisdiction. It was but a little before Mr. Wesley's death that he knew all this, and admired the Providence of God that we have been so favourably dealt with, seeing matters stood thus. That Mr. Wesley was thus a Dissenter will be matter of praise to thousands; that he denied himself to be in any wise such was his weakness, and laid him under much inconvenience."

"It may not be amiss just to notice some of the most plausible objections against that liberty of conscience for which we plead. 'It is contrary to Mr. Wesley's rule?' Suppose it is, if it be not contrary to God's rule, what great harm is there in the matter? Mr. Wesley never avowed himself to be infallible. I think his rule was, *Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ*. But then we deny the fact. Show us the rule; or what rule do you mean? Do you mean the rules of the Society? There is not a word about the Church in them. Do you mean the Poll Deed enrolled in the High Court of Chancery, declaring what the Conference, or what the Methodists are? There is not a word of the Church named there. Is it Mr. Wesley's will you call his rule? We do not find the word Church in it. Is it in the letter which he left to be opened and read in the Conference, after his death? There is not a word about the Church even in that rule either. Now had there been any such rule as you mention, we should have found it in some of the above, especially in the two former, seeing the one is what every member of the society is obliged to walk by, and conform to, and the other is what gives them a character,—a reality in law. 'Well, but he always exhorted to go to the Church and sacrament, and advised the Methodists never to leave the Church.' So you say. But if those assertions of yours be contradicted by Mr. Wesley's well-known practice, you will bring no small censure either on Mr. Wesley or yourselves. Has not Mr. Wesley acted as a Dissenter in London these forty years? Has he not preached, and administered the Lord's Supper, in Spitalfields and West-street Chapels, all those years? or in the Foundry, or New Chapel? And were not all these Dissenting chapels? They never were consecrated; the Bishop of London had nothing to do with them any more than he had with the Jewish synagogue. Did not the other preachers, in connexion with Mr. Wesley, preach in those chapels, and in church hours too, in Mr. Wesley's absence? Did Mr. Wesley ever go to the church in London, except he has been invited to preach occasionally in some church? Did he not preach at Bristol in the church hours? Did he not preach, and administer the Lord's Supper, the last Leeds Conference, in church hours? Yes, on the first Sunday in the month, just in sight of the parish church. Was not that Dissenting? Has he not established a religious economy, or order, and admitted and sent a number of preachers all over the three kingdoms, as well as into America, and the West Indies? Did he not summons those preachers once a year to meet him in Conference? and did he not call them to an account respecting their life and doctrine? Could he do all this as a Churchman? Who gave him any such power; or who could do it as a Churchman? Has he not even formally ordained several of the preachers, and made them promise that they would administer the Lord's Supper? Could he or they do this except as Dissenters? Are not many of the chapels and preachers licensed as Dissenting chapels and Dissenting ministers? And are not both chapels and ministers liable to be fined if they are not so licensed? Is it, then, agreeable to truth for the preachers to enter themselves as Dissenting teachers, if they are not so? or is it agreeable to gospel simplicity to enter the chapels as Dissenting meeting-houses if they are not so? But indeed they must be so, seeing it is the statute in that case provided which must characterize them. The Act of Toleration, which obtains the license, is expressly made for Protestant Dissenters, and if they are not such, why do they equivocate? and if they are, why do they deny it? Therefore Mr. Wesley, and all who have laboured in communion with him, must have acted as Dissenters, whether they have done right or wrong; and we sincerely thank God that they ever did so, seeing many thousands have been savingly brought to God by that means. The case with Mr. Wesley was this, he was brought up in high church principles, and retained them till God taught him better. Nevertheless he loved the doctrines of the Church, and the liturgy, especially the prayers; but it is certain he did not submit to the hierarchy of the Church any more than myself. Indeed he could not; the station in which Providence had placed him was such, that he must either disobey God or man; he chose the latter, and therefore was a Dissenter. The moment he set up the standard in Moorfields, and collected a society, he was a Dissenter, and such was the following part of his life, for which thousands will have reason to praise God to all eternity."



## THE CONFERENCE CONTROVERSY.

*(From a Correspondent.)*

The Conference controversy is beginning to assume a very interesting and a very imposing appearance. It has ceased *now* to be a mere party contest,—a strife of words touching the rites and usages of a conventional society,—that species of squabble or dispute which those who have mingled in it are always left to fight out themselves, and to settle as they please, without so much as a look or a word from their wiser neighbours around them, unless it be some expression either of pity or of contempt for the weakness, the folly, the childishness of which they are guilty, when as brethren they cannot dwell together in love, but begin to fall out by the way. The questions involved in the Wesleyan warfare are questions common to all men, especially to all the avowed and devoted followers of Jesus Christ. They go to every root: they throw open and lay bare to the eye of the church whatever has hitherto been hidden, or covered, or shut up in the house of God. We are led on, in the discussion of these questions, step by step, until we are brought to the seat of the heavenly kingdom,—the earliest perceptible movements of the heavenly life, and the one great, first, and last, and only power that works within us all, both to will and to do. It is He, God, the life-giver, the healer and the hallower of men, that hath begotten us again from above,—from on high,—that hath given us “*power to become the sons of God, born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” We think we can understand this; we feel something of it. We know more of it in our heart than we can hold in our head, or put out into fitting words, save when we speak in the words which the Holy Ghost has uttered to the world. Yes, these are the deep, the untold, the holy things of the heart, upon which the love of God has been shed, making all new, and right, and good within,—a heavenly house, a living building for the Lord God to dwell in; and this is both understood and felt by all who have been renewed in the spirit of their mind, however they may in lesser things have been misled by blundering or ill-guided men,—whatever they may be called in the many-tongued jargon of the fore-doomed builders of the typical Babel,—and wherever, as strangers and wanderers on the earth, they may be threading the crooked and thorny paths that lead there,—who look to God and trust in him, to the new heaven and the new earth, wherein righteousness dwelleth. We have never yet met with one of the children of God,—poor, weak, dull, though some of them may be in a thousand things besides,—who, in these things of God, had not the self-same trust, hope, love,—the self-same witness bearing witness with them that they were children,—and if children, then heirs, joint heirs, with Jesus Christ,—with him, their elder brother,—the heirs of God.

How sweet it is to think that herein the good have never been mistaken since the world began! The witness of God has been greater than all the witness of man, whether for or against. Wisdom has been set right; her being, and power, and blessedness have been made to be seen, and known, and loved by thousands, who have beheld the meekness and happiness of her children. The feelings of the renewed mind have spoken *of* God to those who were the subjects of them, and have spoken *for* God to those who were not. Thus the light of the holy has shone before men, who, seeing their good works, have begun to bless and praise their Father, who is in heaven. It is easy to understand that what we are here trying to write in words,—the true tokens of thought and feeling,—has nothing whatever to do with the always varying and mostly vindictive opinions and traditions of men. These have ever been the ground-works of the many-shaped sectarianism,—the changing, shifting, but still abiding superstitions that have come over the outward church, and gone away for a time only to come back again,—to rest, like a blight and mildew, upon the “trees of God’s right hand planting.” No; the Lord knoweth them that are his; and they that name the

name of Christ forsake unrighteousness. This is the true church,—the building of God,—the dwelling of God in very deed upon the earth,—that standeth fast,—that abideth for ever. The living stones, that are built up into a living house, rising fair,—Jehovah,—Jesus,—God with man,—is filling and will fill all in all. There has never been wanting in the world a seed to honour him. These are the chosen generation,—the *royal priesthood*,—the holy nation,—the peculiar people, who show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his *wonderful light*.

Now, if in this short and hasty sketch there be any likeness to the pattern showed upon the Mount, the model which the Lord of *this life and glory* has himself shaped out, and left for ever with his church, what are we to think of the condition of upwards of one million Wesleyans and their friends in this country, who are held as the goods and chattels, in fee-simple, of one hundred poor sinners like themselves, who have lately waxed very bold, and have asserted their right of lordship and sovereignty over these souls for whom Christ died, and over the buildings which these their brethren have erected in which to worship God? This is the Conference controversy. A hundred men have covered the book of God with a scroll of parchment called the Deed of Declaration, and have the hardihood to tell the whole church of God, yea, the wide world of men, whose steadfast eye and thoughtful mind is now bent upon the “law, and the witness” of Jesus Christ, that they, these **HUNDRED MEN**, have power: yes, mark it well,—read it again,—look at it once more,—mistake it not—it must not be mistaken,—that **THEY** have power to say what is truth; to drive any one they please out from amongst them, though he have been forty years stretching forth his hands to men as an ambassador for God,—to make what *laws* they think fit,—to do in every thing as seemeth them good,—to take in and thrust out,—to bind and to loose,—to do, in a word, *what they will with THEIR OWN*, with all these souls, and with all these estates. They have told us, they have told the world, that the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, masters, lords, supreme and sovereign imperators of the church of the living God, and because we will not, cannot, dare not bow the head and bend the knee, they first frowned, and then scowled upon us, and now they have swept us from the floor, yea, over the very threshold of the temple, and cease not to follow us with the lightning-flash and the thunder-peal of their ecclesiastical anathema. *And this is the Conference controversy.* They know it to be this, and this only; and because we have denounced this antisciptural assumption of a power unknown in the household of faith; because we have resisted this oppressive encroachment upon the birthright of every man, the heavenly freedom of every child of God; because we have set ourselves together to stem this flood-tide of the coming waters of the antichristian deluge; for this cause are we made the butt for the shafts of priestly malice and revenge. Not content with the wrongs which they have, as a Conference, committed upon many of our beloved ministers and thousands of ourselves, by form of excommunication unheard of since the worst days of a rampant Papacy, (an excommunication in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,) they are now doing all they can to alarm the fears, awaken the suspicions, and provoke the jealousies and antipathies of our brethren, in other sections of the Church. We have already met with much sympathy, and some assistance from friends, who could not look on and see the wolf break in upon the fold, and scatter the flock, without lending their aid in driving him back to the forest out of which he rushed down upon it. For this commiseration and fellow-feeling we are thankful,—we are more than thankful. We rejoice that so many of all denominations have discovered that this is no party quarrel,—no sectarian dispute, but the opening of the holy warfare in England, in which all are as deeply interested, and will shortly be as fully engaged as ourselves. That such will be the case, we need only refer to an official document, if not actually written, yet doubtless revised and author-

ized by the *Medusean head of the Hidden Hundred*. If this will not warn them and arouse them; if this will not bid them beware, and be ready for the gathering, we know not what will. It shows they already tremble, and yet hope, by sowing the seeds of dissension and discord amongst the true, the free, the bold of every name, to sit secure in the seat they have usurped, from which they will laugh at the credulity and pusillanimity which they have succeeded in communicating to their betrayed antagonists, whereby to effect their own short-lived salvation. Churchman and Dissenter! after you have read this, and weighed it well, tell us what you think of the *Conference Controversy*. "We should be inclined to indulge the opinion that our *small friends* among the *Dissenters* will, ere long, feel themselves somewhat *mortified* to find that they have espoused a *lost cause*. We are utterly *astonished* that several *Dissenting ministers* should have so far lost sight of those considerations which ought to have weighed with them, as to have lent their chapels and their influence to men whose avowed object is to agitate and disturb the peace of another Christian society. Let such *misnamed ministers* of the Gospel of peace remember that in the course of a just Providence the day of retribution may come; let them listen to the admonition conveyed in the note on the Rochdale case in another part of this paper. These very agitators, whom they are receiving into their chapels, and introducing to their own people, are *openly aiming at the utter subversion of the pastoral office as exercised in the way which the Dissenters as well as the Methodists and the members of the Established Church believe to be of divine appointment*; and the seeds of evil which the agitators will scatter in the bosom of the *Dissenting churches to which they are unkindly introduced, will, no doubt, in this prolific age, find a genial soil, and bring forth a harvest such as will equitably recompense the ministers who can bid the disturbers of other churches God speed*."—See Dr. Bunting's *Watchman*, October 7, 1835. If, in fewer words, there can anywhere be found so much meanness, duplicity, low and contemptible cunning; such a show of fear, of hatred, of malice, and of all uncharitableness,—then we pledge ourselves to write no more. Here we hold our hand awhile, exhorting our readers to put this copy of the *Lantern* into the hands of as many of their neighbours and friends of every denomination, as they possibly can, but particularly to call the attention of all Churchmen and Dissenters to so thinly masked a battery as is now about to be uncovered, that it may beat upon and batter down, (alas! they hope in vain,) the towers of our common Zion.

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#### THE ILLUMINATOR AND HIS PRESCOT CORRESPONDENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—The other day I had an opportunity of perusing a publication called the *Illuminator*, and was much surprised that the editor should charge you with "ineffable hypocrisy" for publishing accounts when the veracity of your correspondent could not be depended upon. Before he makes this charge against any individual, he should first look at home, and see that all is right there. However, it appears that he has received a little additional illumination from some friend in Prescott, and he says that his Prescott friend has furnished him with a *true* account of the state and prospects of the Society in that town, and he appears to be highly delighted with the account he has received. But my opinion on the subject is, that the account he has received is calculated to deceive both him and those who read his precious document; for though it may not be true that there were only "twenty persons at the old place" on the day that Dr. Warren preached at Prescott, (yet it may be affirmed that no person belonging to the Wesleyan Methodist Association in Prescott furnished you with that account;) but it is nevertheless true that the congregation at the chapel kindly lent "to spread discord and confusion" was overwhelming;—will his Prescott friend deny this? As to the discord and confusion he speaks of, it must in justice be said that there is none at the Prescott Tabernacle, for, from what I can hear, they are at peace, and are likely to be so, if the other party they have left behind *will let them be so*; but if falsehood and

misrepresentation are calculated to disturb their peace, I understand that they hear enough of that to try them. As to the number of persons at the "old place" before referred to, the account is variously stated: your informant says it was only twenty; a member of the old place, who is for having Methodism as it is, when questioned on the subject, said there were only about three dozen in the place; another, who has voted for having things as they are, said the preacher had not quite the bare walls to preach to, and that the congregation was very poor; the editor's Prescott friend says that nearly fourscore were counted in the lower part of the chapel. Now who are we to believe? After all the inviting and canvassing, and also the neglect of their St. Helen's friends, there was a miserable attendance in the gallery on that day; not that this is a cause of rejoicing to those who have left, but of sorrow, that there should be any thing connected with Methodism that should cause such fearful divisions in the societies in different parts of the kingdom. It is said by the Prescott friend, that "a smaller congregation than was then present has been *frequently observed* when the anniversary Sunday-school sermons were preached at St. Helen's, as was the case that day." Mr. Editor, this may be set down as a premeditated falsehood; and whoever may be the friend of your opponent, he is no friend to truth. Having been an occasional hearer for more than twenty years, and a regular hearer for ten or twelve years, I never saw that it ever made much difference in the congregations; and the man who has made a contrary assertion must have more impudence than generally falls to the lot of individuals. The St. Helen's friends are under little obligation for the attendance of their Prescott friends at their last anniversary, for I have not heard of one single individual being there from Prescott; but that the funds might not suffer by their absence, they sent a sum of money (if I am rightly informed) to be given either before or after the sermons. I suppose the St. Helen's friends will do the same, in order that there may be no appearance of a falling off.

The *Illuminator* says that some of the friends of the Association have said that only one of the original leaders was left. I should like the editor to say who those friends were; it cannot be any of the Prescott friends, for they know better: they know that four have resigned, and that there are two left. It seems that the editor thought he had gained something here, for I perceive he has said "it is not the case;" and to make it look more imposing, he has put the words in italics.

It must be gratifying to the friends of the Association to know that the numbers increase every week in Prescott, and if I am rightly informed, others would leave the old place, were it not for fear of consequences; and others are far from being satisfied with things as they are. It is farther said, that "although bereft of one or two of their old friends, the true disciples are more united to each other than ever." One or two friends. What can this mean? Does he wish to make the people who read his *Illuminator* believe that only one or two have left the "old place?" If he or any of his party wish to know the real state of the case, they had better go to the Prescott Tabernacle, and they will see, either to their content or discontent, where the principal part of the old friends are, (at least what is now considered by the Conference as old friends,) that is, the giving friends. And, no doubt, the friends at the Tabernacle will be glad to hear that "the true disciples are more united to each other than ever:" and if they have the same views of some of them that I have, they will hope the union will continue to exist, for the company of some of them is in nowise desirable, especially some of the originals, who, with all their noise and apparent zeal, have done more injury to the cause of God than ever they did good to it. This is well known. The difference of Christian feeling manifested by the two parties has led some of the members, who are remaining at the old place, to say that they hear too much backbiting and slander among the "true disciples" than is consistent with Christianity or their own feelings, and that persons who can indulge in such things as these cannot be right, whatever the others may be. I know all the leaders at the Tabernacle in Prescott, and think when they see this they will assent to the truth of what is here stated.—Yours, &c.

#### A FRIEND TO METHODISM AS IT SHOULD BE.

Prescott, Oct. 1835.

N.B.—I do not know how it is, but the reform movement in Prescott seems to gall no few of the Conference party; in other places, Liverpool not excepted, the *Lantern* has done much for us, but it will do more if all the friends unite to aid it.



## PROCEEDINGS AT WHITEHAVEN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WATCHMAN'S LANTERN.

SIR,—Since my last communication, the Association has been favoured, through the kindness of a gentleman here, with the use of a large warehouse, which was opened for Divine service on Sunday the 18th ultimo, and was so crowded that hundreds were obliged to return, having been unable to gain admission. On the most accurate calculation, not fewer than seven hundred persons were gathered together. Two local preachers conducted the services, and truly they were, both as to speakers and hearers, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Mr. Sherwen preached in the morning from *Matt. xviii* and 20, and Mr. Baisbrown in the evening from *Jude*, 21st verse. At the prayer-meeting the influence of Divine grace was felt on many hearts, and numbers declared that they had not enjoyed such a season for many years; joy beamed on every countenance; it seemed as if the days of primitive Methodism were again restored to us,—for God was with us in deed and of a truth.

On the following day we attended the leaders' meeting as usual, being determined to maintain our position in the chapel, unless expelled by a majority of the trustees. Mr. Watmough, the superintendent, and three of his adherents were present, but no remarks were made. After prayer, Mr. Watmough changed his position to the opposite side of the table to that on which the steward of the Association was sitting, and requested the person whom we supposed had been chosen steward to proceed to business, but the novice had forgotten his book. There being no business before the meeting in the absence of the messenger despatched for the book, we proceeded, in the interim, to pay in the money collected in the Association classes. The Association steward cautiously produced his books, aware that Mr. Watmough had an evil eye upon them, and the latter cleared away the table, evidently bent on some desperate game. As soon as the brother first called upon had laid down his money, Mr. Watmough made an unsuccessful attempt to seize it, declaring that he would take all the money and books that came in his way. This low-bred vulgarity excited general indignation, and after a good deal of altercation, Mr. Watmough and his followers decamped; many of the people, aware that disturbance is invariably the consequence of the superintendent's appearance, waiting outside to hear the result.

For sake of peace we have concluded on having all our meetings in the room where the preaching is held. The congregations have increased since the opening, and would be greatly augmented if we could afford more spacious accommodation. Of course the old chapel is very poorly attended, the Sabbath congregation not exceeding, on an average, 150 persons, though it is calculated to accommodate sixteen hundred.—I am, yours, &c.

Whitehaven, 9th Nov. 1835.

A REFORMER.

## "GLORYING IN THEIR SHAME."

In compliance with the wishes of several of our friends, we have great pleasure in giving insertion to the following spirited letter from the *Leeds Mercury*:—

GENTLEMEN,—A communication, signed *John S. Barlow*, appeared in your last paper, in which he thought proper to stigmatize the Rochdale Methodists, "so called," as persons who "appear to glory in their shame." Whether this gentleman thinks it "in accordance with his Christian profession," thus publicly to traduce his brethren, and to charge them with the publication of falsehoods with which they had no more concern than himself, remains for him to explain. Such conduct the Rochdale Methodists are fully prepared to expect from the party to which it seems Mr. Barlow has allied himself. All who actively oppose the Conference are, by it and its minions, at once exhibited to the public as men whose motives are factious, base, and vile: but the Rochdale Methodists feel they have a duty to perform; and neither Conference calumny nor lay defamation will cause them to shrink from it. And if it be a shame to resist to the utmost the assumption of a power by the preachers to expel from office and from membership, not only without, but against the wishes and consent of the officers of the church, and this in violation of express rules to the contrary, then the Rochdale Methodists, "so called," do most assuredly "glory in their shame."

And if it be a shame to insist that rules published in accordance with a solemn promise of Conference, after a solemn treaty with the people, such rules being printed by their own agent, at their own office,—two large editions of them distributed through the Connexion by the Methodist preachers, as its settled laws, and that for many years together,—invariably acted upon and acknowledged in this circuit up to the very last Conference,—observed and obeyed by preachers who have been Presidents of the Conference,—if to insist that rules so established by solemn treaty and so ratified by usage, are sacredly binding on the preachers; and if to oppose their abrogation be a shame, then are the Rochdale Methodists, “so called,” justly charged with “glorying in their shame.”

And if it be a shame to resist the preachers in their attempts to stifle the voice of their people, by preventing the discussion of Methodistic affairs in the quarterly meetings, and by narrowing, or altogether closing up, the avenue to the ear of Conference, then are the Rochdale Methodists, “so called,” disposed to “glory in their shame.”

And if it be a shame perseveringly to require that the people shall have some share in the enactment of laws by which they are to be governed, then are the Rochdale Methodists “glorying in their shame.”

And, in short, if it be a shame firmly to oppose, and unceasingly to endeavour to destroy, the irresponsible, despotic, and, therefore, antisciptural power which Conference has of late claimed and exercised, then will the Rochdale Methodists, “so called,” continue to “glory in their shame.”

Your readers will not be surprised that the contributions in this circuit are falling off so rapidly, when they are informed that, in addition to the previously existing causes of dissatisfaction, a Chancery suit has been commenced by the Conference preachers of this circuit against the trustees of the Rochdale chapel; though the said trustees have peaceably allowed the said preachers the free and full exercise of their ministry in the said chapel, and have never deprived the preachers of any power which the chapel deeds give them. Knowing that an overwhelming majority of the society worshipping in that chapel was anxious to hold a public meeting in it, and knowing also that their trust deeds expressly declare that the said chapel shall be used as a meeting-house for the use of the said Society, the trustees granted the chapel for this purpose; and for so doing their spiritual pastors have instituted proceedings against them, which will probably compel the trustees to expend some thousands of pounds in litigation. The people, feeling that the trustees have been brought into these circumstances by acceding to their wishes, very naturally have resolved to divert their usual contributions, and, instead of supporting a system of which they disapprove, and the plaintiffs, whom they believe to be in error, they will form a new fund, which may be available for purposes of which they conscientiously approve. Who can blame them? Mr. Barlow informs us that the Rev. John Ely had been officiating for them when the school fund collections for the education and support of the preachers' children were made. This eminent and highly esteemed minister was for many years the pastor of a flourishing church in this town, consequently he has some knowledge of the “so called” Rochdale Methodists. As Mr. Barlow has taken upon himself to judge the Rochdale Methodists, perhaps he will not think it improper to ask Mr. Ely whether he thinks they are men “who glory in their shame.” Perhaps Mr. Barlow would also have the goodness at the same time to present Mr. Ely with the *Wesleyan Magazine* for this month, and direct his attention to an article on “the Pastoral Office,” where the most monstrous and Popish claims on the part of the ministers to the sole possession of the “keys of the church” are advocated, and then ask Mr. Ely whether he thinks the men who support, or the Rochdale Methodists who oppose such anti-scriptural powers, are the men who “glory in their shame.” This article not only declares that the pastor only is to judge who shall be retained in the church and who shall be admitted, but that any church attempting to fetter the pastor's power in these matters acts unscripturally. If this be true, the Wesleyan church itself is unscriptural; for one of its express and undisputed laws explicitly says—“That if a leaders' meeting declares any person improper to be admitted into the Society, the superintendent shall not admit such person.” What inconsistency is here! Oh shame, where is thy blush!

Whether the Rochdale Methodists “so called,” or Mr. Barlow and his party are the men who “glory in their shame,” your readers are left to judge.

I am, Gentleman, yours respectfully,

Rochdale, 29th Oct., 1835.

GEO. ASHWORTH.

## SAYINGS AND DOINGS IN THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

*Liverpool.*—On Monday, the 9th instant, the first anniversary of the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association was celebrated in the Music-hall; on which occasion about 1500 of its members and friends took tea together. After the repast was concluded, the secretary, Mr. W. Ledger, read the report, which contained a brief sketch of the expulsions during the past year, and animadversions on the conflicting principles on which Conference claims the right of expelling or retaining official characters and private members. Passing over the acts of violence committed by several of the superintendents, and the incalculable mischief produced by their arbitrary proceedings in regard to Sunday-schools, the report stated that a Tabernacle was about to be erected at the north end of the town, to be held in shares of £1 each. It was also stated that the Woolwich Wesleyan Reform Association have established a Library, and intend to circulate, as systematically and extensively as possible, such publications as give the best views of the defects of the Conference system, and the objects of the Reformers; and it was suggested for the consideration of the meeting, that a Library established in Liverpool would be productive of great benefit to the Association, especially to the local preachers, with whose labours in the Music-hall and other places of public worship the people have been kind enough to express themselves perfectly satisfied. With their usual jealousy and illiberality Conference had excluded the local preachers from the privilege of access to the circuit libraries, to which they claimed an exclusive right on the ground of their superiority, and granted to their more humble brethren the use of scarcely any other books than the Bible and the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine. It was thought, therefore, that by placing within their reach those advantages of which they had been unjustly deprived, the local preachers would be enabled more efficiently to perform the important duties of their office, whilst standard works on Divinity, and other books of unexceptionable character, would, at the same time, convey to the people, especially the younger branches of families, useful and wholesome instructions for their guidance in this life, and prepare them for the world to come. In regard to pamphlets and essays on the system and character of Conference, many better productions than the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine might be found without going far from home. The report went

on to state that the committee had received very encouraging information from various parts of the kingdom, particularly from London; and interesting letters from Cornwall, Rochdale, &c., were read. It was stated that there were about 1200 members of the Association in Liverpool, and nearly 3000 in Manchester; and that Dr. Warren had received pressing invitations to lecture in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London.—The meeting was subsequently addressed by Mr. Farrer, the chairman, Mr. Livesey, of Bury, Mr. Dignum, of Nantwich, and Messrs. H. Pooley, jun., D. Rowland, and T. Ormes. Mr. Farrer was then re-elected chairman for the ensuing year; and on the motion of Mr. J. A. Picton, seconded by Mr. Christian, the thanks of the meeting were unanimously voted to him for the able manner in which he had fulfilled the arduous duties of chairman during the last Methodist year. Mr. Farrer having returned thanks, an impressive prayer was offered up by Mr. Livesey, and the meeting separated about half-past nine o'clock, highly gratified with the proceedings of the evening. The collection to defray the expenses, and in aid of the funds of the Association, amounted to upwards of £30.

*Cornwall.*—Extract of a letter from Mr. Averill, dated Wadebridge, Cornwall, 3d Nov., 1835:—"My health has been greatly impaired through great mental and physical labour. On my way from Sheffield I attended three public meetings, advocating the cause of Methodistical Reform; letters were constantly meeting me from my circuit urging my immediate return. When I arrived home a meeting of the officers of the circuit was called; it was very numerously attended by the officers of our own, and a few from other circuits; I gave them a report of our proceedings in Sheffield, &c. &c., of four hours length. Never did I see them so much united: several resolutions were passed expressive of their determination to abide together; to withstand the agents of the Conference; and to use all Christian means to carry out those great and scriptural principles to the support of which we stand pledged. In addition to this we had, at the appointed time, our local preachers' and quarterly meetings; these were unusually interesting, important, and encouraging; we found an increase to our number of members, a considerable number on trial, and our finances in a good state. We have now fifty-six preachers, and expect several more on

our next plan. I believe our people are doing well in spiritual things, and we are united and happy; our congregations in almost every place in the circuit are increasing; our state and prospects as a circuit were never so bright; we seem to be ripening for a glorious outpouring of the spirit;

'Oh, that it now from Heaven might fall.'

Devonport and Plymouth are waiting for us; we have many reformers in that neighbourhood; a chapel is offered to us, and with it some of their local preachers offer their services. At Launceston we have an opening also in many parts of that circuit, which will be embraced as soon as our strength will permit; many members and local preachers are waiting to come with us. We have entered the Holsworthy circuit, but many parts of it are yet waiting for us; preaching places are prepared, and many are waiting to join us. We expect to visit the Liskeard and Bodmin circuits very soon. I may use the language of Dr. Warren and say "We can by no means keep pace with the demand made on our services; the whole country seems in a state of readiness to receive us." As soon as my health will permit, and we obtain a third preacher in this circuit, I am going to visit various places where we have openings, and make arrangements to supply them regularly with preaching. We have held public meetings in all the principal places in this circuit, which have told well; we shall hold them in neighbouring circuits as soon as our time and strength will permit. Have you heard of the Conference party having a revival in this circuit? They are sending about a report to that effect, but it is not so. I cannot find out a single conversion; a very few have joined them (*Tories*) at Camelford, "*out of envy and strife*." They have also said that the reformers of this circuit are tired, and going back to them: *this is also untrue*. We still retain possession of all the chapels in the circuit except at Camelford, where we have the Town-hall. One of them the superintendent has broken open twice; but it has each time been retaken by the people; once it was nobly defended by about 150 women; they took possession of the chapel in his presence, made him get a man to mend the door he had broken, and sent him out of the place, telling him that if he would come over to our side they would take care of him; if not, they would pull the chapel down rather than let him have it. Another time he caused a terrible uproar in the same place on the Sabbath, but he met with no better success than before."

*Longport, Nov. 9. 1835.*—The superintendent of the Burslem circuit has thought proper to withhold Mr. Hancock's ticket, and thereby to expel him, for having been connected with the *Wesleyan Circular*; [Is Jacob S. Smith expelled for the same offence?] taking the chair at the Association meetings at Shelton; attending the delegate meeting at Sheffield; and for recommending the *Watchman's Lantern*. These allegations were deemed sufficient proofs of Mr. Hancock being a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Association; and as he refused to give the pledge required, the superintendent subsequently informed him, at a leaders' meeting, that he was no longer one of the society!—*From a correspondent.*

*Douglas, Isle of Man, Nov. 4, 1835.*—The bulk of the Methodists in the two circuits on the Island are of liberal sentiments, and many of them avowed members of the Association. The Conference sub-despot has, however, had courage to expel only one of the proscribed body, and that one, not for his being a member, but for the extraordinary crime of selling your *Lantern*, Mr. Broadbent being, seemingly, of opinion that it is more criminal to distribute light, even in a professional way, (the expelled brother being a bookseller,) than even to be attached to "the vile Association." Mr. Broadbent, however, has expelled one too many for his own welfare: his wickedness and cruelty are producing their usual consequences. Two intelligent and efficient local preachers have resigned, in consequence of the expulsion of their fellow-labourer; many of the members are so aggrieved that they are leaving the society; and others are withholding all supplies. The Association in Douglas have taken two rooms for public worship, one of which was opened on Sunday, the 1st instant, when two sermons were preached, by one of the Liverpool local preachers, to overflowing congregations, scores being under the necessity of retiring for want of room. The little band of reformers in Douglas are much encouraged by present appearances; and, giving themselves afresh to God in this work, they hope to see the return of good days, and to be instrumental in their measure of restoring original Methodism.

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All the high churchmen build much upon their *jus divinum*, or divine right. This fable, as Mr. Wesley justly calls it, is founded upon the notion of the uninterrupted succession, (down from the apostles to the present bishops,) a circumstance which, if allowed, must give



no small weight in the scale of Popery : but whatever plea the Papists may have in that imagination, surely it will not become Protestants to make use of it, seeing that when they abjured a Popish *jus divinum*, they could only adopt a *jus humanum*, except what they derive from the oracles of God. The *jus divinum* has been a most terrible engine of persecution, both in the hands of Papists

and Churchmen. This is a proof to me that all national religions have been national tyrannies : and must the fingers of a few poor Methodists be itching to pluck the same bloody fruit? Must they set up an image, and summon all the provinces to bow down to it? Let them enjoy their privileges with thankfulness, without putting a yoke upon their necks."—*The late Mr. T. Taylor.*

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### TO OUR READERS.

Whilst a retrospection of the memorable events of the past Methodist year is, in some respects, calculated to excite painful emotions in the minds of those who have been driven by acts of priestly tyranny from their retired and peaceful habits, and unwillingly obliged, for a season at least, to renounce all connexion with their brethren ; still, it is cheering and consolatory to reflect on the noble stand the people have made in defence of their rights and privileges, and on the success which, by the blessing of God, has attended their disinterested sacrifices in furtherance of the principles of Wesleyan Methodist Reform on which the Association was originally founded.

Our readers will recollect that it was for the purpose of spreading information throughout the societies on the subject of Methodism that this publication was established ; and so far as its circulation, which is still increasing, could give currency to the views of the Association, the object has, in a great measure, been accomplished. It was the intention of the editor and conductors to publish the *Watchman's Lantern* regularly every fortnight, but extraordinary events sometimes rendered it necessary to publish weekly, and twenty-eight numbers, instead of twenty-six, have already been printed during the last twelve months. Under these circumstances the next number of the *Lantern* will not be published before Wednesday, the 6th January, 1836, and afterwards monthly, unless more frequent publications should be deemed expedient by the delegates, whose opinion on this point we shall be happy to receive as early as possible. In the interim other classes of the community must be appealed to, and the battle of Wesleyan Methodist reform fought on a wider plain by means of the Metropolitan press.

✂ The Society quarterly tickets will, in future, be printed by Mr. John Stephens, to whom our friends are requested to apply at the *Christian Advocate Office*, No. 153, Fleet-street, London.

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